



# Twist

The Nation's Only Bi-Coastal Street Music Magazine

March, 1990

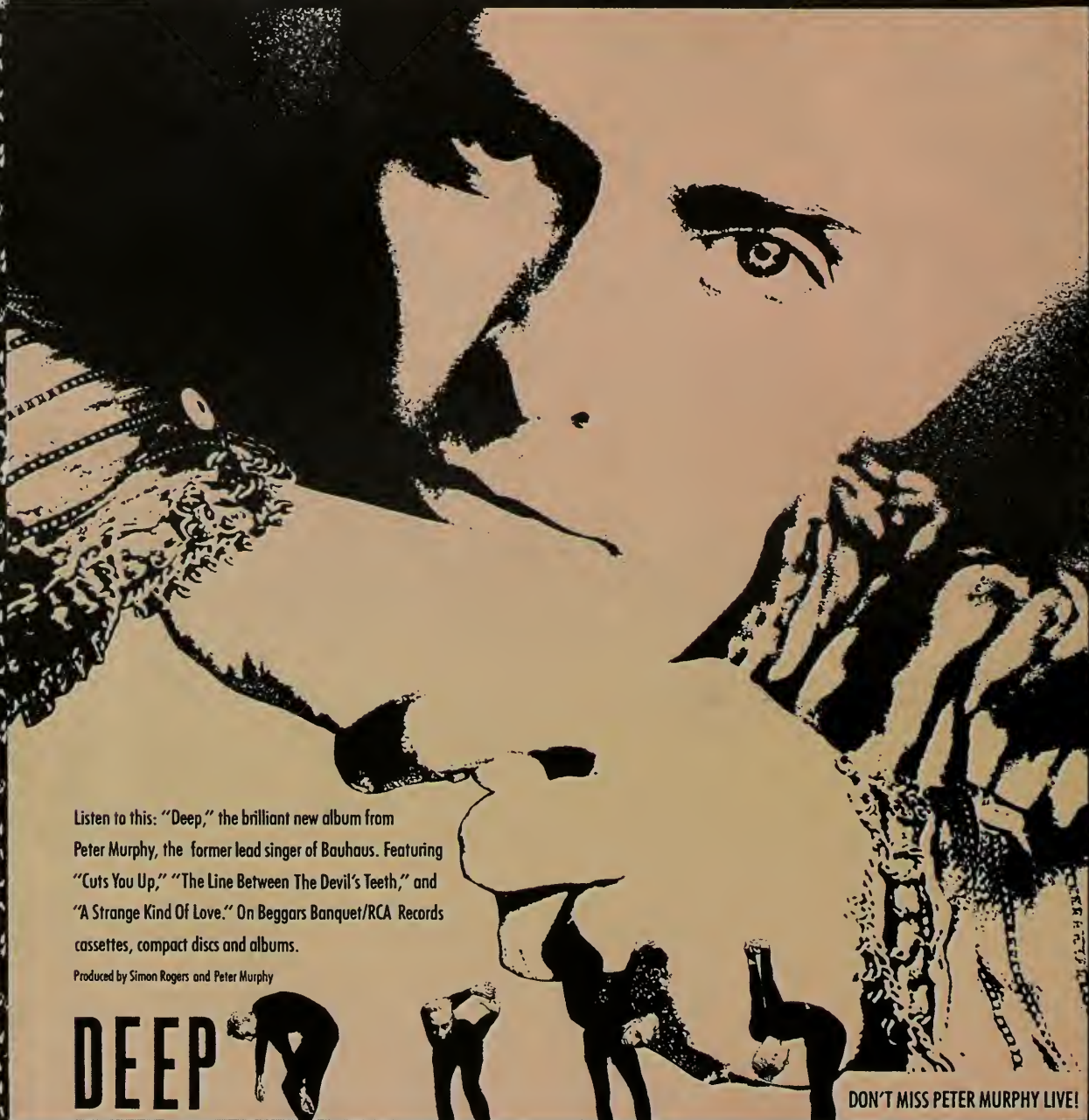
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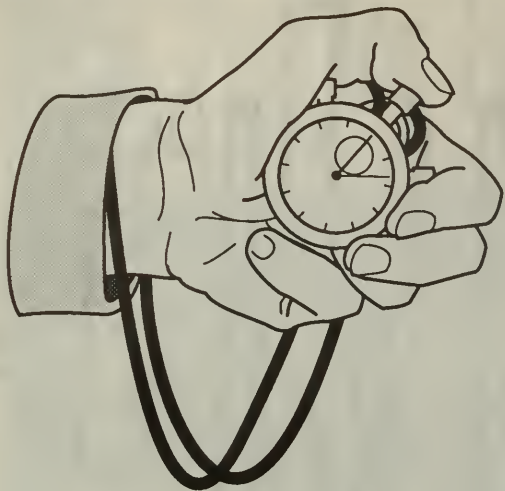
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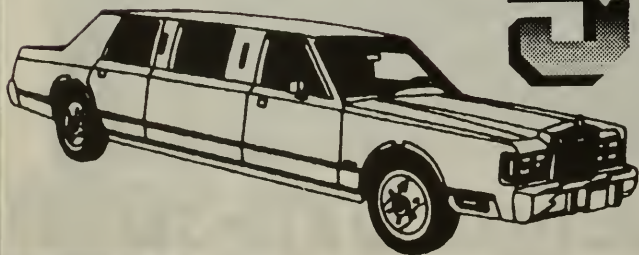
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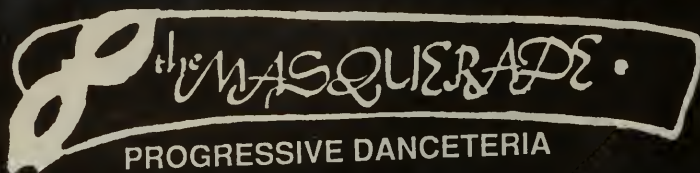


# Thrust

Vol. 2 No. 3 March, 1990







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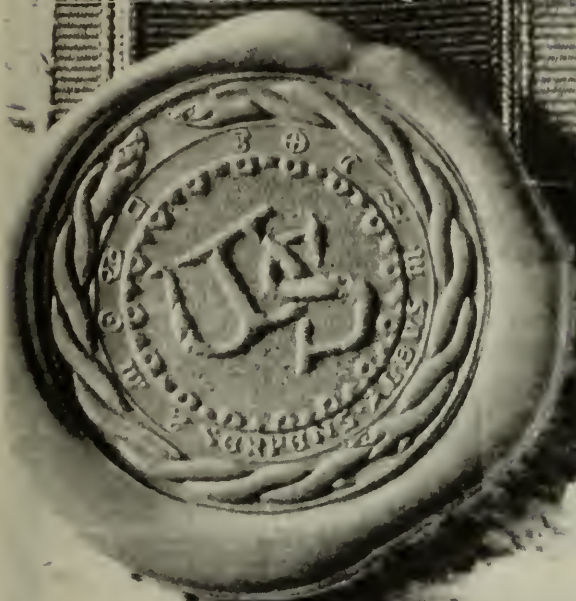
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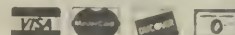
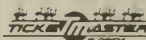
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# Fiptoe Through The Gutter

by Blackie

It's really nice when a band breaks out of a metropolitan area after only being together nine months. Everyone claps when the first album is released and five hit singles go to number one. Golly, isn't the music industry keen.

Wake up!

With their fourth album hitting the streets, it's clear that Savatage has slowly earned every merit. In their ten year career, the band has not slept on a bed of roses. Their initial independent releases, *City Beneath the Surface*, *Sirens*, and *Dungeons* attracted national attention and led to a signing with Atlantic. Still, not one of their first three major releases netted the band the acclaim or attention of much less cohesive metal groups.

With *Gutter Ballet*, the industry predicts that Savatage will break big. Support from fans, both in America and in Europe, has been overwhelming and Atlantic has targeted Savatage for their Metal Push of 1990.

On the eve of a sold-out European tour, Jon Oliva, frontman of Savatage, lured Thrust's own Blackie for an exclusive, insightful conversation.



# Savatage





**THRUST:** The new release, *Gutter Ballet* is out. How will the "new" sound be received by your hard-core fans?

**JON OLIVA:** Our fans have become more open-minded about different things, which is great. It's what keeps the music going. You still have your little glitch of people who are like, "*Slayer till death... and everything else sucks!*" You'll never be able to get through to those people. I know plenty of people who love Slayer and still love Savatage.

**THRUST:** Are people who associate Savatage with "metal" or "thrash" going to hear the the new album and go, "*Wait a minute...that's Savatage?*"

**JON:** There's a ballad, "Summer Rain" which is like a reality. It's the only song on the album which deals with any kind of relationship, the boy-girl type thing, but it deals with it in a very deep, heavy way. It's not like (whiney voice)..*"Ooh I love you baby, miss you, miss you,... BYE!!"* It's more like, "*You left me, you bitch!*" (laughter)

**THRUST:** I like that. (more laughter)

**JON:** So *Gutter Ballet* is the big fantasy thing, this little midget guy, he's a jester, you know, with the funny hat and stuff. You know those little court jester dudes, and he's back in the 18th century, or whatever century he's from and he gets thrown into this time warp. He walks through this tunnel where he gets dropped down in the middle of New York City right on 42nd street and he observes this whole world. The lyrics are really cool! "*Neon cuts the eyes, the jester sighs at the world beneath*

*his feet.*" It's actually pretty intense.

**THRUST:** "Gutter Ballet." Who actually thought of that term?

**JON:** I did. I come up with most of the formats and stuff. We work close with our producer too.

**THRUST:** Who is...?

**JON:** Paul O'Neill. We have a very good relationship. Criss (Oliva) will work on on most of the basic music structures of the heavystuff. The more experimental music, I write. We write most all of it between myself, Criss and Paul. We'll just formulate ideas. I think of weird things, I always thought—gutter—ballet. There's so much contrast. Gutter and ballet—the fantasy of it. A ballet is very fantasy!

**THRUST:** You've got street level and snob level.

**JON:** Yeah, the ballet is very real, but NOT real. When I think of ballet, I think of something like sleeping in a dream and this beautiful girl goes skating by.

**THRUST:** Like Swan Lake?

**JON:** Yes, Swan Lake. We do all kinds of weird stuff. We're very strange people.

**THRUST:** You guys aren't that weird, not that bizarre.

**JON:** No, not yet. We haven't killed any animals or nothing. We haven't blown anybody up in days.

**THRUST:** Let's delve into the songs. What inspirations come to mind?

**JON:** Name some titles.

**THRUST:** "Of Rage and War"

**JON:** That was written when I was in New York City, stuck in a hotel room watching the news. It deals with the political bullshit of war and the countries that have nuclear bombs. The reality that everybody faces is that they can die at the push of a button.

**THRUST:** "Mentally Yours" appears to be a song that someone under a lot of stress could relate to.

**JON:** I would say so. (laughter) It's something I relate to very well. "Mentally Yours" and "Thorazine Shuffle" are two *mental* songs. I spent some time in a rehab center in which numerous patients were given thorazine to mellow them out. That's the "Thorazine Shuffle." Buy the record and give it a listen.

**THRUST:** "Thorazine Shuffle" is a bonus track on CD and cassette only.

**JON:** That's right!

**THRUST:** I've noticed an addition to the band.

**JON:** Absolutely!

**THRUST:** Tell me about him.

**JON:** His name is Christopher. This is great, we've got two Chris's, two John's and a Steve. Steve said to him, "You've got to change your name to something." Christopher said, "Okay, I'll change my name to Steve." (laughter abounds). Ah yes, his name is Chris Cafery, he's the newest member. He's

playing rhythm guitar, back-up vocals, and he helps out on keyboards. He's actually played with us before. He was on the Dio tour with us, but he was offstage. Wwe were like, "Aw man, the guy's funny, we have a great time..."

**THRUST:** Cute little guy.

**JON:** Yeah, he's a cute little thing too. We decided to add another person to fill out the stage some more, and *he's the one we chose.*

**THRUST:** Lucky him.

**JON:** Yeah, he's great.

**THRUST:** Since the album's out, what's next?

**JON:** The album was released January 20. In December we shot the first video.

**THRUST:** For "Gutter Ballet?" Is that the first single off the album?

**JON:** Yes, and that's cool.

**THRUST:** Tell us about the video.

**JON:** We did the video in New York City on the Lower East side. It was 20° below. We froze our asses off. Five rats died of hypothermia on the set. The story line deals with the reality of street life in NY, with a runaway featured as the main character. Good overcomes evil! She lives happily ever after and the band blows up the Lower East Side with all these pyrotechnics.

**THRUST:** There was an orchestra in the video. Is Savatage hanging out with the Boston Pops?



**JON:** Those were actors, actually. They were paid to "play" their instruments. Dr. Killdrums taught them their parts.

**THRUST:** You're heading out on tour. Are you doing opening slots or headlining?

**JON:** We go to Europe February 2 supporting King Diamond. We'll also be doing a few headline dates. We're currently slated for the national Testament tour starting March 20 in Minneapolis. There's no doubt we're gonna stay on the road for at least 10 months. And, we might even be going to Istanbul to rock those Turks.

**THRUST:** Would you say that you get a better reception in Europe than in the States?

**JON:** It's the same. It's just that Europeans show it in a different way. The thing that's really weird is that Americans are insane. When they come to a heavy metal or a hard rock show, they're coming to let it go. The Europeans are more like, "If the Americans want to hear the music, they'll go home and put the album on." When they come to a show, they want to be a part of the show. Now the Europeans are very, very calm while you're playing, then freak out when the songs are over. Then they're real quiet again. It's like an off-and-on thing cause they want to see if you can play the stuff live as good as on the record. They're more....what's the word I'm looking for...judgmental...no...

**THRUST:** Observant?

**JON:** Critical! They're more critical of your show. If you're over there you'd

better be kicking some ass, cause they'll BOO you off the stage. That's how critical they are. In America, if it doesn't sound like ...um...God, they don't really care, cause they're out there going Arrgghh! Metal! You know, going nuts!

**THRUST:** It's not safe out on the floor at some shows, especially a Savatage show.

**JON:** Yeah...(laughter, again) that's the big difference, other than that, they all look the same.

**THRUST:** Same t-shirts?

**JON:** Same t-shirts, jean jackets and leather jackets.

**THRUST:** Back to the song "Gutter Ballet," it's great! Were you thinking about radio accessibility?

**JON:** Uh...yeah....yeah (hesitant), ...You know, with Savatage it's this thing, radio hates us. I think it's the name. But we don't write stuff with radio in mind cause we don't *expect* to get radio play. We're not really a radio band. We like to compare ourselves to a band like the Scorpions. They were on their fifth album before they started breaking into the mainstream and writing more commercial stuff. If we wanted to, we could write, and just fill up a whole album.

**THRUST:** You could write another "Rock Me." (Savatage song off of an old compilation album)

**Jon:** Yeah! (laughter in masses) Right, right, something like that. But it's not us. This song, "Gutter Ballet" is different. It's unique but it's still Savatage definitely.

**THRUST:** You have a voice and style that is unique.

**JON:** Thank you. It's something I definitely have to work at. I definitely have to take care of it too. It's not easy. Singing Savatage music is very difficult.

**THRUST:** Everyone I've talked to has been excited about the album.

**JON:** Really? So the buzz around town Has been good?

**THRUST:** It sure has. I also want to tell you that you look really good, very healthy!

**JON:** Well, you know I got to the point where I was a mess. I had serious personal problems. I was messed up, you know, a lot of drugs. I've definitely lived and experienced the rock and roll lifestyle, and it almost killed me. Now, I stay away from that stuff, I don't drink like a fish anymore. I behave myself, cause I've got to.

**THRUST:** Take your Flintstone's multiples?

**JON:** Everyday... Fred and Barney. I feel great. I think people are really going to be surprised.

**THRUST:** Well, naturally you've got more energy and stamina now.

**JON:** I work out everyday, playing basketball and tennis, stuff like that. I stay in good shape now. You have to. I almost died a couple of times doing that stuff, and hey, I got another shot. So I ain't blowing it!

**THRUST:** Well Jon, to wrap this up, is there anything you want to say?

**JON:** Yeah! When do we get paid! (laughter) I'm just glad that the word out there is good and that there's good response to *Gutter Ballet*. I'm sure the whole band will be glad to hear that people are really into it. We're REALLY happy about that. Just stick to it, we're gonna give you plenty of rock-n-roll. Don't judge this album by "Gutter Ballet," the song. It doesn't represent what the rest of this album is about. This album is 90% very heavy.

**THRUST:** You're not off the beaten path?

**JON:** No, we're not off the beaten path. It's not another *Fight For The Rock*, where we tried to completely turn things around. We did controlled experimentation this time, and the album remains very, very heavy. Much like *Hall Of The Mountain King*, except the songs are better.

*Note: At this time, new guitarist Chris Caffery enters the room.*

**JON:** This is new Chris.

**THRUST:** Hi.

**CHRIS:** Hello.

**JON:** You know, we've got new Chris, and old Chris, the once Big Jon is now Medium Jon, then we have Johnny, who was once really BAD... now he's okay. Then we have Wacholz.

**THRUST:** Dr. Killdrums!

**JON:** He's always been the same Dr. Killdrums. He hasn't changed kids! That's coming right from the gutter snake himself. He hasn't changed and he never will!





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# TIM KARR

## RUBBING IT THE RIGHT WAY

**KARR:** I played in bands since I was sixteen in Montreal. Garage bands, playing dances, that sort of thing. Right before I moved to LA, I was playing in a band called White Knight. I was doing the club circuit and the cousin of my guitar player came to Los Angeles and she talked me into moving to California. I got here and tried to join a couple of bands, just to keep my chops. I had no money at all. I looked around for a lot of things I wanted and settled for a lot of things I didn't. Eventually, I figured I had to do something since no one was doing what I wanted to do. I had to stop worrying about players and being in a band. I was trying to get a publishing deal to get an advance. Actually, I just wanted an apartment and some food, put some gas in the car, the finer things in life. Management expressed an interest in me but they asked me to drop my partner who was obnoxious.

**THRUST:** Did the realities of the city mold your writing?

**KARR:** In a way. When you hit rock bottom, you realize there's nowhere to go but up and that comes through in the writings. The songs are definitely autobiographical—living off the streets with strippers and all the weird things that go on.

**THRUST:** How did you hook up with EMI?

**KARR:** My manager went to New York with my materials and EMI expressed an immediate interest. It was great. They put me on retainer so I could eat. What more could I ask for?

**THRUST:** Were you signed as a solo artist?

**KARR:** Yes, what they did was fly me around the country to write songs with different people. We wrote about fifty songs and ten were chosen for the album.

**THRUST:** What songs are most accessible on your album?

**KARR:** "Deserec," "I'm Not Falling in Love" has that big gang chorus. "Time Out For Love" is a good song. I didn't even write it. It's the second song on the second side of the tape.

**THRUST:** What a memory!

**KARR:** Five years in LA and I can still use my brain!

**Bands! Bands! Bands!** It's all that people think about when the word "rock-n-roll" comes up. The role of the single artist has been overlooked in the industry. Sure, solo artists may come from bands and the pop field may have it's solo megastars, but rock itself seems to have passed over the individual.

Enter Tim Karr whose debut release, *Rub Me The Right Way*, is proving that a solo performer can be true to the rock tradition without relying on past group efforts or gelatin molded pop songs.

Recently added to the Richard Marx tour, Tim Karr finds himself stuck between being true to his rock roots and falling into the trap of the "solo pop artist."

**THRUST:** Has it been hard to stay away from the evils of the Hollywood streets?

**KARR:** Well, living with strippers, they have lots of money and tons of stuff and it's hard to stay away but you have made a decision and my decision is music.

**THRUST:** Tim, you're a rock and roller in the true sense of the word. You're opening for Richard Marx on his tour, are you afraid of getting pushed into a pop market niche?

**KARR:** I look at it this way. I have to play ball with the record industry. No matter how good you are, if you don't get on the radio, no one will ever know. You've got to play ball for the first record. You give them what they want as far as radio goes and then you sit down and say, "Hey, I've got a proven record, I've got people behind me."

**THRUST:** Do the songs have an underlying theme?

**KARR:** Yeah, most of them are girl-related! Good grind music!

**THRUST:** What about the tour with Richard Marx?

**KARR:** I started on February 23 and will continue through the end of the tour.

**THRUST:** How do you feel about opening for him?

**KARR:** Richard has been cool to me. I can't complain.

**THRUST:** Did you assemble a band just for the tour?

**KARR:** No, I'll be working with the band even after the tour. I want them to write and contribute to the second album. Up until then, it's just me, then it will become a group. Why should I give away something that I've struggled ten years to do? I'll share the glory after I enjoy it for awhile. (laughter)

**THRUST:** What's the band's line-up?

**KARR:** There are five members plus me. The two guitarists are from Austin, Texas: Lance Keltner and Ian Moore. Ian is the next guitar wiz. He gets press in Texas for being the next Stevie Ray Vaughn. He's real good. We have the same harp player, the best around, John Chrissy. The bass player is from DV8. His name is Cordell Crockett. The drummer is Jim Blair who has played with Animotion to Mar-tika to Spencer Davis.





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*For the uninitiated, Multicolor House has just been signed to DB Records. In addition the band has added two new players, rounding out their already distinct and progressive sound.*

*With the ever present beat of Satanic Latino Music wavering above, the official Multicolor Interview began. Unfortunately, Jeff the waiter thought we were escapees from a mental institution and asked if we were authorized to operate electric appliances on our current medication.*

*"Would you like appetizers," the conversation began as Natty (singer), Bryce (drummer), Chuck (bassist), and Bill (guitarist) sat down at our specially provided, electricity included Chi Chi's interview table. Missing from the festivities was Sam, guitarist and writer for the band. Sam had some shelving opportunities which could not be passed up so the band noted his absence.*

**THRUST:** Let's start off with some history!

**NATTY:** OK, I guess I'm the historian.

**THRUST:** In 1492, ...

**MULTICOLOR:** Columbus sailed the ocean blue.

**CHUCK:** How did I miss that?!

**BILL:** We'll explain later, Chuck.

**NATTY:** Well, let me tell you. Sam and I started the band. We started playing and were living together so it was easy. That was about four years ago. Bryce came aboard two years ago. Chuck and Bill are the New Editions.

**THRUST:** The New Editions? Do we get choreography?!

**NATTY:** Chuck has been with us since November and Bill has been with us since December.

**BILL:** We're brothers.

**THRUST:** By choice?

**CHUCK:** By birth.

**BILL:** Brothers of the grain.

**NATTY:** Is that enough history? Maybe we should say what we do.

**CHUCK:** I'm the bass player and sing back-up vocals.

**BILL:** I'm Bill and I'm part of the dynamic guitar duo of Sam and Bill. We play guitar. We play *good* guitar.

**THRUST:** Sam?

**NATTY:** Sam's not here. Sam is the principal songwriter and guitar player.

**BRYCE:** I'm Bryce and I drum, drum, drum.

**NATTY:** I'm Natty and I play with my throat.

**THRUST:** How did each member of the band come together stylistically to form a cohesive group sound?

**NATTY:** That's really a hard question. We can't answer that. Go on to the next one.

**BILL:** Our influences lean toward progressive sounds. We have an interesting sound that doesn't sound like anyone else.

**CHUCK:** We've actually gotten harder.

**BILL:** Let's not say we're hard. This is Thrust!

**CHUCK:** I guess if you mixed some southern folk-rock with power trio guts and a little jazz, you'd come up with something that sounded completely nothing like us.

**BRYCE:** So if you want to hear that, don't buy the album!

**BILL:** When I first saw it, there was something about the band that made you want to see them live. It made you laugh. It made you cry. There was something great about it that I hadn't heard before. A lot of active playing and a screaming female with red hair who happens to be everywhere at once. There was something special about it. It had heavy rock overtones, but was indescribable.

**THRUST:** The band has two new members, Chuck and Bill. Was it hard coming into an existing band?

**CHUCK:** When I came in, I didn't know how much of the old bass playing I should have kept. I was real apprehensive about changing things. I didn't want to make waves. And then I thought, I want to leave my own mark on the band. If I want to change something, I will. I'm not afraid of my position.

**CHUCK:** As far as the album, we're anxious to get it released. But, we're also interested in getting back into the studio immediately and doing some things together.

**BILL:** When I joined the band, I think everyone was apprehensive about getting another guitarist. I knew that there was plenty of room, but we've all been through the situation of the second guitarist. It can sound muddy and sloppy. Sam and I have to be careful but it seems that things are blending well.

**NATTY:** They're two completely different types of guitarists.

**BILL:** We're adding a lot to the band without taking anything away.

**CHUCK:** The mesh is harmonious. You'd

think that five players would detract from the unity of the band but it isn't the case. It's like a party. There's enough energy flowing around to lock into it and have fun.

**THRUST:** Has the band accepted the new members graciously?

**CHUCK:** I don't know. There were a lot of eyes on me when I became the bass player. I had a lofty reputation to live up to.

**NATTY:** When Bill came aboard, so many people came up to me and said "All right, great. You've added another guitarist."

**BRYCE:** I'm going to speak for Sam a little bit. I know because I've talked to him about it. Sam was holding back and didn't know what to expect. Chuck was new and then we added Bill. He just wasn't sure. But the way things have turned out, everybody's happy. Things are getting better.

**THRUST:** How has the band dealt with more members in the same stage area?

**NATTY:** When Chuck and Bill first played, which happened to be at the Thrust Party at the Ritz, I was scared for them. It was a new thing but neither one showed visible signs of nervousness. I was really proud. They're complete professionals.

**CHUCK:** Now that there are five members on stage, we have nowhere to go so we jog in place.

**THRUST:** Does the whole band participate in writing?

**BRYCE:** Well, Mr. Tape Recorder, there will be some work from everybody getting involved in the writing process, including Natty maybe.

**NATTY:** After I go through therapy.

**THRUST:** Massage therapy?

**NATTY:** No comment.

**THRUST:** Moving on to the album, what are the strongest tracks?

**NATTY:** I can't even remember what songs are on this record! We did it in Tampa in a comfortable 24-track studio. We did thirteen songs and ten of them are going to be on the record. Of those ten, my favorite ones are "Time Waits," "Follow Me," and "Song on the Moon." For "SOTM", we set up acoustically. Sam, our ex-bass player, Sean Connely, and I played on acoustic guitars. I think it came out fantastic. We spent only about \$30 on the production but it came out really cool. What are your favorites? (to Bryce)

**BRYCE:** Well, he asked about our strongest songs. Our strongest song tempo-wise is "6 A.M." I think our most effective songs would be that last few we recorded, "Can't Be Found" and that stuff.

**NATTY:** There were three songs we didn't like. In the meantime, we wrote three new songs, went back into the studio and recorded them. "Follow Me" and "Because of Love" are the other tunes. All

# MULTICOLOR HOUSE

by Christopher Robin



of them are great.

**NATTY:** Sam wrote "Time Waits" over five years ago, before we were even a band.

**BRYCE:** That song is still one of our biggest sellers!

**NATTY:** You'll like it, Chris, if you ever come out and see us!

**THRUST:** I saw you at the Thrust party!

**NATTY:** Were you paying attention?

**THRUST:** Not really, I was partying!

**NATTY:** Now, now everything in moderation.

**BRYCE:** Ah, go all the way.

**THRUST:** Multicolor House is a new signing to DB Records out of Atlanta. How did that relationship evolve?

**NATTY:** Practice. Practice makes perfect.

**BRYCE:** Seriously, we were practicing and we got a phone call. It was DB Records saying they had signed us.

**NATTY:** I have a really good friend

named Jim Johnston who helped us produce this record. He's been a friend of mine for years. He's in a band called The Chant from Ft. Lauderdale who lives in Atlanta now. He owns Safety Net Records which Charlie Pickett is on. DB and Safety Net decided to put out some of the Safety Net catalog.

**THRUST:** Is this a million dollar deal that will net you glory and fame?

**NATTY:** No.

**THRUST:** When will the album be out and what is it called?

**NATTY:** It's called Multicolor House and it should be out mid to late March.

**THRUST:** What kind of support does DB Records give you?

**NATTY:** They're just putting the record out, paying for distribution. We paid for the recording and they paid for everything else.

**BRYCE:** We should mention Jim again because he was so instrumental in getting

this project completed. Jim is our professional pal and confidant. He told us we had to get an album out. He came down for the whole process.

**THRUST:** Did he produce the album?

**NATTY:** He ran the boards. We knew what we wanted but we didn't have a full studio experience. He helped us learn the environment.

**THRUST:** Where does the band go from here?

**BRYCE:** I don't have any grandiose goals.

**NATTY:** We want to get enough attention to finance a new project quickly since we all want to work together in the studio.

**THRUST:** How do four guys feel about being fronted by a woman?

**BILL:** She gives us a really good attitude because she has such an intense stage presence. There's a whole different attitude. We're a rock and roll band but there's this danceability added. I think the audience likes it too. It's a well-rounded product.

**THRUST:** Does Natty intimidate the baknd?

**NATTY:** No, I'm the typical female. There are a lot of women in this business who are not seen because magazines are close-minded. There are a lot of female vocalists. There should be more female musicians. The bottom line is that females are making money for record companies now so there willing to take a look at things more.

**THRUST:** Where is the band going?

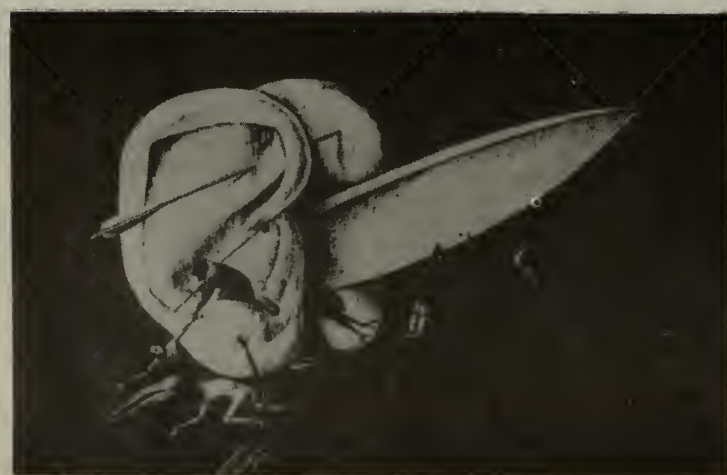
**NATTY:** Straight to the top! I want to go as far as I can. I just want to play music.

**CHUCK:** We're going to promote this album and get back in and work on a new project.

**NATTY:** I don't think that any of us have the lofty idea that we're going to be on MTV in a year. We're more interested in making music and hopefully we can make another record. I'm really itchin' to get back in the studio because there's some cool stuff that needs to be laid down.









**THRUST:** Tell us about The Big F. Is the band from Los Angeles?

**THE BIG ROB:** We are now, but originally we're from all over.

**THRUST:** How did the band come together?

**ROB:** We originally tried this project in '87. Six months later Mark came along and we moved to a secluded studio in North Hollywood. We went in every day and came up with this. We decided to play three gigs and see if any major labels would be interested and I was hoping Elektra would be interested; I liked their logo.

**THRUST:** Which just got changed?

**ROB:** Yeah, the old one's better.

**THRUST:** How was the response to your initial shows?

**ROB:** Elektra and a few others were interested. We turned the others down because we wanted 100% artistic control. Elektra agreed to it and we were signed a week later.

**THRUST:** Were the other labels not willing to give you creative control over your project?

**THE BIG JOHN:** They did but only on their terms. "You guys need an arranger to come in and work on the songs," or "Hand over your video concepts to us and we'll take care of it."—that kind of stuff.

**ROB:** We spent too many years doing this to have someone come in and change two chords here and there. We're not crafting a pop song which needs to fit a standard, marketable mold. There is no right or wrong. It's only whether we like it or we don't like it. We write our music for ourselves and hope that other people like it. We've written seventy or eighty songs in the two years that the band has been together.

**THRUST:** Do you consider yourselves an LA band?

**ROB:** What is an LA band? We're part of The Big F. I don't have allegiance to that scene. I really don't know what that is. You were there. There's a few sincere bands that set some sort of trend, whether it's fashion or music and then there's hundreds of clone bands emulating it.

**THRUST:** Where does the creative energy of The Big F come from?

**ROB:** Within. Seriously. Lots of frustrations, lots of insecurities, lots of anger—all of those seemingly negative emotions which we decided not to repress. We let them come out. We have lots of fights. We scream a lot. 95% of everything that comes out when we jam gets discarded. We made a conscious attempt in the beginning not to sound like anyone else. It's a very painstaking writing for the Big F.

**THRUST:** Is the friction among the members of the band ongoing?

**ROB:** It is. At this point, when we're reproducing what we've created, it's not too bad. But the creation process is tough.

**THRUST:** Describe the Big F?

**ROB:** It's hard to. I guess it's a dictatorship anarchy. I know that doesn't make any sense. You have three guys who all want to be the boss. At the same time, they don't want to have any leaders. It's a very shaky situation. What ends up happening is you have three guys fighting and screaming and putting in their ideas.

**THRUST:** Are most of the songs hard to solidify?

**ROB:** If we're extremely lucky, things might just click. "Powerpig" is an example of that. We wrote that song fast, almost too fast. Most of the time, it's really painstaking. It evolves very slowly. We're lucky in that we haven't been involved with Top 40 bands. I think when you go through that you tend to tap into borrowing from that bag of licks.

**THRUST:** How has the public reacted to your performances?

**ROB:** It's been interesting. We've been touring since December. It hasn't been that extensive but I've found an interesting relationship between us and the audience. First of all, I think that 99% of the audience haven't heard the music. Secondly, we don't give the crowd the standard, cliché 3-1/2 minute rock songs. There's not a lot of outgoing stage rapport. It's like the band and the audience are both waiting for the other to make the first move. Sometimes it really clicks. We play excruciatingly loud. It's something you get bludgeoned by so you either learn to accept it or you don't. Most of the kids stand there and soak it in.

**THRUST:** How's touring with Voivod and Soundgarden?

**ROB:** We've talked to both of those bands and it's refreshing and encouraging to know that they've gone through what we're going through. We are all trying to carve our respective niche in the world.

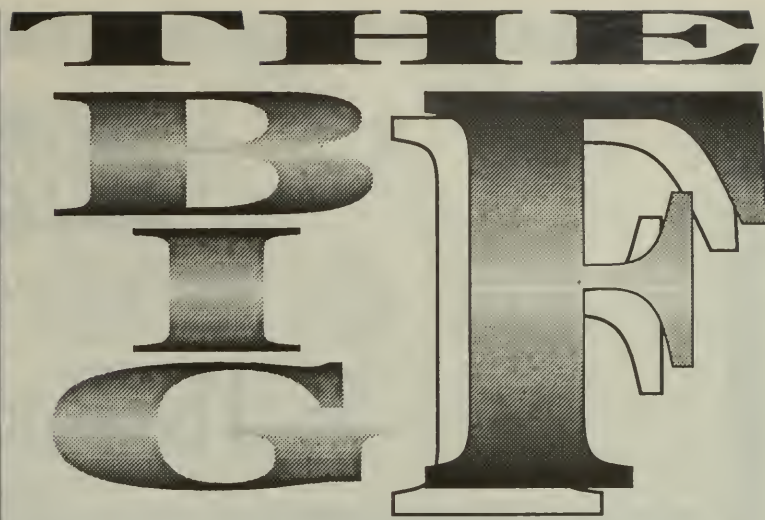
**THRUST:** Do you put your life into your music?

**ROB:** We pour our guts into it. It's not like something that we can just do for eight hours a day and then put it aside.

**THRUST:** Soul wrenching?

**ROB:** Yeah, but I don't think there's any other way. Initially, a band like us has a good chance of falling flat on our face. But we've got to persevere. There's no doubt that it's going to go. I believe that totally.

**THRUST:** Where did the imagery of your logo come from?



From a "windowless bare-light bulb bunker" in Los Angeles comes The Big F. Forged from friction, molded in mystery, the band produces "a relentless force field of unresolved tension." Powerful, dark emotions invade the souls of the band consisting of John Shreve (bass, vocals), Rob Donin (drums) and Mark Christian (guitar). Shattering the illusion of band contentment, The Big F recently exposed Ybor City to their dissonant savagery.

In The Big RV, Thrust captured the cynical sentiments of The Big F.

**ROB:** It's from a painting done by a friend five hundred years ago. We thought it embodied the spirit of The Big F. It's a knife going through two cars. The cars represent the normal standards of musical taste and the knife is just ripping on through.

**THRUST:** The band is striving for a plateau of originality. Have you reached that goal?

**ROB:** I think we have. You can't be 100% original but you can juggle the pieces and make them unique. That's possible. You have to set your standards really high which is what we do. You just don't accept mimicking other people and if it's slightly reminiscent of something, we chuck it.

**THRUST:** What is the band's perspective lyrically?

**ROB:** We try to keep the lyrics open to interpretation. John might not like what I like and visa versa. So, we just let it go.

**THRUST:** Is the band achieving pockets of success?

**ROB:** We got reamed in New York. Of course, when you get reamed, you've got to realize it's just bad journalism. (Laughter)

**THRUST:** Tell us about your three videos.

**ROB:** Well, Elektra gave us money to do one video. Instead, we took half the money, found three unproven, young video directors and produced three videos. We had the directors pick their favorite songs: "Dr. Vine," "Kill The Cow-

boy," and "Albert Tango." All of them are refreshingly distinct. No biker mamas, no tattoos, no pyrotechnics. It's probably boring for most people but it's refreshing for me.

**THRUST:** Are the videos available to the public?

**ROB:** Yeah, Elektra is offering the three videos for \$2.98 to the public, basically to cover postage. What a bargain!

**THRUST:** How are you doing on the college scene?

**THE BIG JOHN:** I got an "A" in Science!

**ROB:** It's really happening slowly. In the band's mind, it's a natural progression. It's hard to break this act but we'll do it step by step.

**THRUST:** Being a three-piece unit is almost an oddity. Was it hard finding two other guys who you could gel with?

**ROB:** You can't base a band like this on a blood brother friendship. We argue, sparks fly and everyone goes right on the edge of collapse and teeters there. I think it's vital and I've also noticed that with a three piece, it's a lot harder because each member has to take on more than just his role. To make it sound big, we've got to expand our roles.

**THRUST:** Can people relate to the music?

**ROB:** Yes of course. I think you have to listen to the music often to like it. If you don't like it at first, put it aside then give it another chance. You may be surprised.



# Thrust

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# CATS IN BOOTS LICKIN' FOR A GOOD TIME!

A four member rock-n-roll band hits the streets. The beat is heavy, the groove is tuned in and the look is fresh. Sounds like a typical rock and roll success story out of Los Angeles. But wait, there's a slight twist to this group. Two of the members, guitarist Takashi "Jam" O'Hashi and bassist Yashuhiro "Burch" Hatae, are from Japan. The other two, Joel Ellis and Randii Meers, are good 'ol American rockers who shined their street tough boots and offered them to these Far East Felines. Lo and behold, *Cats in Boots* was formed.

Led by Joel Ellis, a street-sure, energetic frontman, *Cats in Boots* is clawing their way through the rock and roll jungle. "It's got its ups and downs," Joel states. "At first it was difficult. It was hard to do business. But, on the music side of things, it's different."

Instead of launching their career from the safety of the United States, *Cats in Boots* relocated to Japan, cut a six song independent record and released it. Jam was already a household name in the Orient, selling over 700,000 albums with his first band, *Seikami II*.

The communication problem between

the band was initially solved by Jam's girlfriend who had to mediate between the musicians. But, through dedication, determination and friendship, the band managed to break down the cultural and language barriers which tested their musical bond. "We've been together almost two years so we can talk to each other. I speak Japanese and they speak English fairly well. There's some things that they don't understand but we make it by."

When the band is on stage, however, the language barrier crumbles leaving nothing but the sonic power of music. "It happened from the very beginning," boasted Ellis. "Music is definitely a universal language."

Succeeding in Japan was a goal the band strived for. However, their goal was surpassed by the sheer response of the Japanese public who pushed the tape to the number one slot in the independent charts, breaking every previous sales record. Rekindling the memories of the Orient, Joel shared, "It was exciting and a challenge. Right off the bat, it was something I was interested in. I wanted to go to Japan instead of starting off in America. It was a new thing."

And were the Japanese audiences tough? "You bet," Joel emphasised. "They are much more jaded. The audiences are so impressionable because socially, they are like twenty years behind the United States. They're trying." As for breaking all those sales records, Joel takes it in stride. "We certainly didn't go to Japan to break sales records. We just want to get on the road and play for people."

Turning to the music, *Cats in Boots* don't claim to have some new form of rock and roll. Instead, they pull from two separate musical roots. Joel was influenced by the blues which set the tone for his style. "I was turned on to the blues when I was young, very young. I think the blues and puberty came about the same time. Basically, the blues are nothing new to me." The Japanese players come from a more structured, metered musical background. "They know about the blues as an art form but I don't think they can really appreciate where it comes from or what it means. That's one of the barriers that the band had to cross over. They were always meticulous on the meter and never swayed tempo or laid the beat back. When you find the pocket, the groove is every-

thing. I've always believed that and that's what I've learned from the blues. I think John Bonham is a good example. He often played behind the beat. The thing that makes the blues so good is being able to get into that."

The first track on the new *Kicked and Clawed* is the upbeat anthem, "Shotgun Sally." "It's about this psychotic, crazy woman," Joel volunteered. "I broke up with her and we embellished it to be about a crazed woman with PMS who gets her hands on a shotgun." Even though it was the last song recorded for the album, the band liked it so much that they chose it for the first video/single.

Now, *Cats in Boots* have released their second single, "Her Monkey." They hope it's catchy back-beat groove will attract the attention of rockers in this country. Hoping to get the message across to Florida, Joel recounts their last trip down south. "We were just down there but we didn't get to play Tampa. We hope to be back for Spring Break."

Summing up the attitude of the band was simple for Joel, "It's a whole lot of energy right in your face. A lot of kickin' and clawin'!"





# Hollywood Confidential

## The Latest Breaking Music News from Los Angeles

Compiled and composed by Hot Rod Long

What's up, east coast dudes? I'm back to give ya' the scoop on LA poop and the latest news about some national acts. I'll start by telling you briefly about the "pay to play" system in LA. At most clubs and through most promoters, local bands are required to pay anywhere from \$400 to \$900 just to get on a show held on the strip. The only way the bands can make money is by selling huge amounts of tickets at overinflated prices. Since most bands also have to pay for their crew and advertising, they tend to lose a lot of money each time they play. Be thankful that this policy has not spread to your area...Former Floridians Adonnis seem to have beat the system, selling out some of their recent shows. The band's material is not that strong, further proving that if you look good, you can pack shows in groupie-infested Hollywood...The biggest news around LA right now is not Zsa Zsa, but Byte The Bullet, who were just signed to a huge contract with Virgin/Charisma Records. Self-dubbed the "Southern Boys who Make the Noise," they took over the strip in 1989 and won the support of local celebrities as Bill Gazzarri, most of his dancers, myself, and every writer and record company person in town. They recently debuted some new material at Hot Rod Long's Jam much to the delight of the capacity crowd. They will be one of this year's promising new acts...The Hot Rod Long Jams, held in early February at the Roxy Theatre, were both rousing successes. The shows were packed with screaming fans witnessing ten headlining acts on one card. The first show featured outstanding performances from Rude Awakening, Lypswitch, Silence, Slam N Groove, BB Chung King, and Desolation Angels who are about to release their first CD and kick off their debut U.S. tour. The London natives have dates in Florida tentatively scheduled for June and you can order their CD for eight bucks by writing to *Rock Network at 1907 Palmgrove Ave. LA, CA 90028*. The band is going to be as big as Priest and Maiden, so check them out today...The second show, a week later featured CBS Recording Artists, Beau Nasty, a revitalized Daddy Ray, Black Cherry, Attack Abyss, Masquerade and many others. A surprise appearance by members of Warrant and the Zeros capped a splendid evening of ear splitting, heavy metal fun, LA style. The Zeros have finished recording their debut album, called *4,3,2,1, The Zeros*. It should be available nationwide very soon, as their label, Total Chaos is nearing a distribution contract with a major label...Sebastian Bach of Skid Row has come close to setting the record for most arrests on one tour, as he was recently canded in both Boston and Richmond, VA...The debut

from LA boys, Shark Island, titled *Law of the Order*, is a great hard rock disc that is bound to do well. The band was a fixture all over California for the last five years and they have the material to make you want to purchase the album...Ruthless Management mastermind Jonni Teagarden, is sending Rattlesnake Shake on a tour of Japan, which will hopefully be as successful as the tour Taz had there last summer. Taz have just completed a demo deal for Warner Bros., but it is still undecided whether or not the label will pick up one of this town's and Japan's, favorite bands. Former Racer X drummer, Scott Travis has been named as the new drummer in Judas Priest, and to celebrate the occasion, the original line-up of Racer X reunited for one show only, really reminding me that the band's breakup was tragic. The overabundance of multi-talented alternative bands in town has captured my attention. This Fascination, Circle of Soul, New Tribe, The Waters

away...Van Halen clones, Zion Heights have built quite a following, but their material is a little lacking for nationwide success. All-girl-rockers, Havoc, are jamming, and have all of the guys in heat at their shows...Relativity Recording Artists, Jailhouse debuted their second video just before hitting the stage at a sold out Roxy Theatre. The band has catchy, melodic tunes, but it was hard to tell which sounds the sampler was playing and which sound the band was playing...Jungle Alley are shopping one of the new year's best demos and will definitely be getting a deal soon, but it's uncertain who the lucky label will be...Florida natives, Revlover are dazzling crowded arenas all over Hollywood and have also been receiving good press. They were also ranked number 2 in a best of local rock show on KNAC...Pretty Boy Floyd will release, "I Want To Be With You" as their next single but the band no-showed at their last scheduled performance for Hollywood writer/

ity, to complete an already solid line up. Any interested parties should call (213) 316-6934 for more info...Female thrashers, L-7 have released a single on Seattle's Sub Pop records. If you're lucky enough to own a Sound Garden Sup Pop release, I heard you could get up to \$400 for it.

In the spirit of old AC/DC, Warner Bros. has signed local sensations Rhino Bucket. The band got signed without playing a single "pay to play" show, and their banishment of this system has given other bands some encouragement...Warrant returned to LA to play the last show of their 16 month, 300 date world tour, supported by Britny Fox and the Zeros...Warrant will be traveling to Florida to record their second album, called *Vertical Smiles*. Remember that you heard it here first. After months and months of futile searching, I have finally obtained a copy of the classic, *Hall of the Mountain King*, by Tampa natives, Savatage...Antarctic natives Gwar have released vinyl in both the US and Europe, and have been the recipients of rave reviews in the respected rock circles. For those of you unfamiliar with the band, they wear gigantic, gruesome, slime covered caveman costumes and hurl blood into the crowd while sodomizing lifelike dolls onstage. With names like Odorus Ungerosus and Slymenstra Hyman, this band is 300 years ahead of their time...Orange County glamsters Lixx Array have sold out their last five shows and have the best looking babes in the world clawing and scratching to get as close to the stage as possible...Imagine World Peace have just returned from a second sell-out trip to Hawaii and are headlining major shows all over town. If you're band would like to see the Aloha State, send 2 promo packs and demos to *ABT Hawaii, Ent. 8901 Sunset Blvd #1, LA, CA 90069*...Guns N Roses have just entered the studio to begin work on their new LP which is not due out until next year. The band is still trying to decide if the package is going to be a double LP or just a single LP. Imagine the demand for a GNR double LP. I bet your mouth is watering already...In the city of "Bullshit Rules" it is now against the law to put flyers anywhere, except directly in the hand of another person. Tremendous fines are now being levied against clubs and bands for flyers found posted on public property. So, one form of band advertising has bitten the dust...

That's it for this issue. I'll be back with more interesting news next month. Any bands that would like to be mentioned in this column, should send all correspondence and demos to Hot Rod Long, 1907 Whitley Ave. LA, CA 90068.



XYZ and Ted Nugent

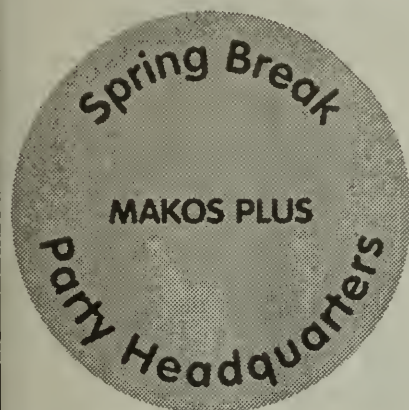
Edge, and Mary's Danish are my favorites, but the alternative scene is as thriving as the rock scene, so I can't mention all of the good bands...Lillian Axe has been dropped by MCA Records...The Royal Court of China have left A&M for lack of label support and are currently melting speaker cabinets all over town in search of a new deal...Bang Tango and Britny Fox are touring together...Cherry St. have landed endorsements ranging from guitars to hairspray, and are also packing the clubs with screaming fans and A&R people as well...Damsel are just finishing up a demo with producer extraordinaire, Alex Wolman, who also just finished producing the single, "Rattlesnake Skin" by Florida transplants, Lypswitch. The lypsters are the hottest unsigned band in town and are certain to get signed within a few months...MCA Recording Artists, Ferrarri are close to finishing an incredible album. I had the pleasure of attending a studio session, and was blown

promoter Gerry Gittelson...Aussie rockers Mortal Sin are touring Europe with Testament and will be returning to the states for a limited number of shows during February. The band's sound is like Metallica and they have some killer lyrics to boot, so if they play in your area, go check them out. Femme Fatale are in the studio working on their second LP for MCA. It will be good to once again have the beautiful Lorraine Lewis played hourly on MTV...The new Love/Hate album will be released in the next few weeks. It is one of the most eagerly waited debuts in many moons...The Sheilas, an all girl, commercial rock band, are looking to gain the interest of a label, playing showcases and shopping a very catchy demo. Sounding like the Bangles with a little more guitar work, "Savin' It," and "Walking to the Beat of a Drum" have loads of commercial potential...Female band, Misguided is looking for a fifth member, either a guitarist or a keyboardist with vocal abil-



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*All Ages/Come Early*  
*Doors open at 4/Show at 5*

**The Mighty Lemon Drops**  
**Ocean Blue/Jon Wesley Harding**  
**Sunday, March 18**

**Cuban Club**  
**2010 14th St. Ybor City**  
**An All Ages Show**  
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**Tuesday,**  
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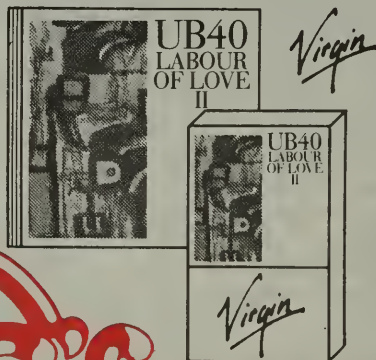




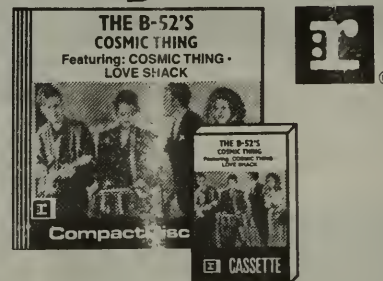
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*Todd Grubbs*



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**The Guff**

**Brutality**

**March 12**

**Last Rite/  
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**March 19**

**Kronik/  
Detriment**

March 1-4

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March 7-11

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March 14-18

Ordeal

March 21-25

Stiletto

March 28-31

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MEMBER NAME INSTRUMENT AGE	Randy Holt Keys, Vocals 11 Moon years	John "JP" Price Drums 36	Greg Billings Pan flute 19 (I think)	Tom Cardenas Bass 21	Ronnie Garvin 6-string road dog between 25 and 35
PERSON YOU ADMIRE MOST	Chris Phillips	Donald Trump	Ronnie Garvin	Bobby Martino	Leo Fender
FAVE FOOD BEST HANGOVER CURE	Highway Gourmet Sleep, sleep and more sleep	Chinese Beautiful women	Chicken Budweiser	Egg McMuffin Do a shot of Goody's	Any edible Substance 6 pack of Bud
FAVE VENUE TO PLAY	Sundome	Down-town	Stage	Orlando Arena	Tampa Stadium
FAVE VACATION SPOT	Cha ;cha Island	Breckenridge, CO	Dog Track	Cayman Island	Anywhere in a boat
FAVE BRAND TOOTHPASTE	Crest (original flavor)	Peroxide	Aqua-Fresh Super Stripe	Colgate, regular flavor	Baking Soda & Milk
FAVE ROMANTIC RESTAURANT	Chili's	McDonalds	Melting Pot	Armanies	Favern on the Green
PET PEEVE	Prophile Questions	Rap Music, Tight underwear	Tourists who can't drive	Traffic	Signs with burnt out letters
MUSICAL INFLUENCES	Ray Charles, et. all	Zeppelin, Bad Company	Slim Whitman	Stanley Clarke	Johnny Winter, Ronnie Montrose
NAME OF 1ST BAND YOU PLAYED IN	The Tired Ones	The Jaguars	Lovers LTD	Jupiters Child	Orphans



Featuring

## ORDEAL

PHOTO: DJ JUSTICE

NAME INSTRUMENT HAIR	DON E. MAC Vocals, Guitars, Keys Brown	CHRIS SEAMAN Bass Brown	DAVID HOOLIHAN Drummer Blonde	MICHAEL KILLBORN Vocals, Guitar Blonde
EYES BIRTHDAY	Hazel August 4	Brown November 17	Blue May 18	Blue April 9
FAVE BANDS FAVE DRINK	Priest, Rush, Kix Bloody Mary	Sex Pistols, V. Halen Bud and Cuervo	Boston, Rush Crown	Rush, Beatles Bud, JD
MOST HATED BAND	New Kids on the Block	Joan Jett	Sex Pistols	Grateful Dead
FAVE MOVIE FAVE PASTIME	Star Wars Creating	Sid and Nancy Reading	It's A Wonderful Life Naples Partying	Yellow Submarine Running
PERSONAL HEROS	Geddy Lee, Hugh Hefner	Bugs Bunny, Al Bundy	Bugs Bunny, Neil Pert	Eddie Van Halen Bill the Cat
PET PEEVE	People Who Can't Drive	People who litter	Things Breaking on Drum Kit	Women with Tattoos who Smoke
WORST NIGHTMARE	Sara Lee	My Bar Tab	Spiders	Chris Moving In With Me
FIRST CONCERT	Devo	Todd Rundgren	Nugent (I think)	Cheap Trick (1978)



# THE GREAT AMERICAN STIFF

I was watching the idiot box the other night and who do you think was on my screen? I'll give you a hint—the head cheese, the big guy. You got it, George Bush. Skippy was on the tube telling me we need to spend more money on defense and I thought, "Fair enough." But, the more I pondered this, one thing kept bothering me. "Who is the enemy?" The Ruskies used to be the enemy, but with Glasnost and Pstörki and all the other stuff going on with Gorby, I don't think the Red Menace is what it used to be. Then I thought, "Surely, China is the enemy. Peng and his croonies ordered the military to slaughter unarmed students who just wanted some freedom in their lives. But here was George telling me the government of China is a friend. Well George, Peng and his murderous leeches may be your friends, but they sure in the hell aren't friends of this great American.

So I asked my roommate Jeff, "Who is the enemy?" Jeff tells me, "Stiff, drugs are the enemy." Fair enough. But what are we going to do, go into a country we're not at war against with stealth bombers and billion dollar tanks and nuclear missiles and blow the hell out of some poor, third world farmer who is probably not making enough to buy a carton of smokes a week. Maybe Skippy should take some of that crazy money he wants to spend on defense and put it into drug education so we could eliminate the demand. Then the third world farmer could grow something else. Maybe that doesn't make sense to the prez. It makes sense to me, but what do I know!

Then I thought, South Africa must be the enemy. But with P.W. Botha outta there and De Klerk in, they're making great strides to right the wrongs of Apartheid. I thought Nelson Mandella would die in jail, but he's free after many years. That's a start.

I realize I've rambled on and this is supposed to be a music magazine. As you can tell, I have a lot of anger and an opinion about everything. So, writing this column is a good way to let it out. Hey, if anyone out there knows the enemy, let me know. If there's no enemy, this country is wasting a hell of a lot of money on defense that could be put to better use.

I received a couple of tapes from local bands, so let's start the music part of this column off with that. First off, the Tampa band Dirty Virgin sent me a package. I'll confess right off. I didn't think I would like this because I'm not much of a fan of heavy metal. But after I put the tape in, I was pleasantly surprised. It reminded me of TSOL's *Change Today* LP. The tape is called *Sloppy Seconds* and it features 8 original songs and a cover of "Secret Agent Man." My favorite song on the tape is "Justice." It's a political song. That's probably why I like it. I also like "Love Potion 69" I don't know if these guys ever heard of Gene Loves Gezebel, but that's a song that GLG would kill to write today. The tape is available at all cool record stores in the Tampa Bay area.

The other tape I received was from the Barons of Love. It's three cover songs done in the sleazy rock and roll fashion that we have all come to love and expect from the Barons. Songs include two Cramps covers, "Voodoo Idol" and "Teenage Head" and from the Iggy Pop catalog, "Chief of the Jungle." If you like rock and roll played down and dirty with no-frills, check the tape out. Next, a friend gave me a 7 inch, four song EP by the local hardcore band, Awake. Three of the songs are mid tempo and have a 7 Seconds feel to them. The fourth song, entitled "By The Horns" is all-out thrash. It's a real cool effort and stacks up favorably against any hardcore out there. Check it out on Skene! Records based in St. Paul.

Local bands, send me your records, tapes and some info on your band. I'll review it and you'll get free publicity. I realize I've said that in the last two columns, so buckos, I won't be saying it again. The address is Thrust, 8401 9th St. N #B-220, St. Pete, 33702. Be sure to put in big letters, Attention: STIFF.

Here's some of the stuff that I have been blasting through suburbia and driving my yuppie neighbors from hell crazy with. First off, the new Fugazi 7 inch called "3 songs". Fugazi is headed by the king of straight-edge, Ian MacKaye. I'm probably the farthest thing from straight-edge imaginable (anyone who knows me can attest to that fact) but I'm open minded. So if people don't want to party, fine I'll make it up for you. Anyway, this is powerful stuff. "Song Number One" is probably the best thing they have ever done, dark and intense with "way cool" lyrics. The last verse goes "Life is what you want it to be/So, don't get tangled up trying to be free/And don't worry about what other people see/It's nothing." The B-side has an instrumental and a song called "Break-in." Violent music for violent times.

The Canadian band, No Means No, have just released a gem called *Wrong*. Excellent lyrics and strong playing throughout. Definitely in a class by themselves, "Wrong" is right in my book. One verse at the end of "Tired of Waiting" sums it up, "There's a fine line between biding one's time and wasting one's time/Do you know what I mean?" The band is on *Alternative Tentacles*.

The Ramones have a semi-new LP out, called *Brain Drain* and it's been blasting out the Bose's quite regularly. It's typical Ramones which means it's good and I'm really "jonesin" to see these guys live again. They cancelled the show at the Cuban Club because Joey broke his leg but they're scheduled to return to our fair city on April 28. Be there because everyone needs to see The Ramones at least once a year.

Well, the big news on the concert front had to be The Jesus and Mary Chain playing a handful of dates. On Feb. 15, The Reed Brothers took the new, improved Cuban Club stage after a less than rousing set by the industrial band, Nine Inch Nails. The band opened the show with "Taste The Floor" off their first LP and played a good mix of material from all three of their studio albums. Some highlights included, "Sidewalking," "Never Understand," and "Halfway to Crazy" from the new release. After about an hour, the band walked off the stage. They didn't say one word to the audience throughout the entire show. So, after seeing them in Atlanta a few years back when they played their infamous 25 minute set, (which we knew was all they would play before we embarked on our 1000 mile adventure) we headed for the exit. But wait, this is the new JAMC. Still, I couldn't believe it when they came back out for an encore, and a second encore, and unbelievable as it may seem buckos, a third. Then, halfway into the second song, "Kill Surf City", there was an equipment failure and the band walked off the stage. It was quite a show. The only problem was that the patrons of some trendy yuppie restaurant/bar bitched about the noise and the show wasn't loud enough. This noise ordinance crap is really starting to get on my nerves. The Cuban Club has been having shows longer than the yuppie crowd has been gathering. And for a long time, the only thing that kept Ybor alive was alternative music. So to you trendy people, go find another area to pollute with your plastic lives.

After, JAMC, it was off to Cesars to see Elvis Hitler. I guess the USF Student Government put this show on and when the President of Student government heard who was playing, he fired the girl who booked the show. Lighten up, asshole. Did you listen to any of their music before you came to a decision. I

doubt it. I hate racists. But with songs like, "Green Haze," "Cool Daddy in a Cadillac," "Rockin' Over Russia," and "Ten Wheels For Jesus," this stuff isn't even close to being racist. And upon meeting Elvis after the show, he was the most normal looking, down-to-earth, all around good guy I've had the pleasure of meeting. This band played a tight, spirited show bordering on brilliant. It's a shame they got bad publicity and only a sparse crowd. If you can't see the humor in a name like Elvis Hitler, you have no sense of humor.

There's no way that Jesus and Mary Chain can play five shows in Florida without me seeing them more than once. So, we piled into the Toyota and headed for Melbourne. After driving around 2 1/2 hours looking for shelter, we finally got the last room in the Minnesota Twins Airport Hotel in the beautiful Melbourne area airport. Melbourne has a cool radio station and that's about it. The bar where JAMC played was called the Power Station and it sucked hard. We got there and were told that 9-inch nails would go on at 8 and JAMC would go on at 10. Yeah, right! Nine Inch Nails went on at 11 and JAMC went on at 12:30. The bar had no A/C, the employees were rude, hey I could go on. The point is, if you're a cool band playing in Florida, avoid this place. If you're in a glam band, by all means, play there.

Anyway, not much changed with 9 Inch Nails in the two days since the Tampa show. JAMC played for about 50 minutes and that was it. Not a word to the crowd, no encores, nothing. Who could blame the band? It was 120° on the floor so it had to be 20° hotter onstage. Before JAMC's tour is over, I will see the show that they're capable of. So, buckos, until next month take care. And could someone tell me who the enemy is?



The Jesus and Mary Chain







What's that you say? A polished, energized rock group has broken and it's out of where... Indianapolis? You've got to be kidding? *Little diddy, 'bout Jack and Diane*... I know what music comes out of the midwest.

Maybe, you should reevaluate your opinion. After all, Sweet FA wasn't named after little pink houses. Fronted by Steven De Long, Sweet FA's rhythm section is hammered down by Jim Quick and Tricky Lane. The dual guitar explosion of JT Thunder and Jon Lightning embellishes an already spicy combination.

Let there be no doubt that this midwest powerhouse band scores a rock solid punch with their debut album, *Stick To Your Guns*. The record buying public won't be hearing such great tunes as "Whiskey River," "Do A Little Drivin," and "Southern Comfort" until May. But, "Prince of the City" and "Love Rhythm" will hit radio stations across the country the first week in April.

If industry buzz is any indication, Sweet FA could be as big as Warrant, Skid Row and even possibly Guns N Roses. "They're the best unsigned live band, I've ever seen" emphasized Brett Hartman (MCA A&R). "They've got one of the best albums of the year. Look for this project to be a major success."

Not light words, but Sweet FA is not a light band. Steven De Long takes the time out from his FA schedule to prep Thrust for the band's appearance at the Rock-it Club on March 4. Next time around, you'll have to see Sweet FA from the nosebleeds of your favorite arena. Get out there and see a huge band before everybody else catches on.

# SWEET FA

**THRUST:** Sweet FA has a different story to tell than most of the bands that are hitting the national crowd these days. Instead of forming in New York or Los Angeles, Sweet FA's roots are based in the heartland of the country, Indianapolis, Indiana. What perspective does Sweet FA have coming out of the midwest?

**STEVEN DE LONG:** The music situation in the midwest is pretty stark. The big thing is to be in a cover band. And the bars keep it that way to sell drinks. A band comes in all week long and does mostly covers and a few originals if they're lucky. It's almost like a video jukebox situation. About two years ago, when we put this whole thing together, the concept of the band was to break down that wall throughout the midwest. We started playing the clubs, doing all originals. We refused to do covers. We'd go up and play one set on the cover band's gear and then get off stage. It started catching on. That was the first wall we kicked down. Then we hooked up with our manager, Bob McCutchen, and started practicing at The Ritz in Indianapolis. Now, original bands are playing here every night. There's new life in Indiana.

**THRUST:** Was it hard getting away from the midwest stereotyping which only acknowledges acts like John Cougar Mellencamp and Henry Lee

Sum-  
mer as being  
"Midwestern"?

**STEVEN:** There's nothing wrong with those guys. They have shed their own light on their style and the fact that something cool can come out of Indiana. We just wanted to prove that isn't the only thing that can come out of the heartland. We just want to prove that we can rock as hard as anyone, no matter where we're from. Check us out live and they'll be no doubt in your mind.

**THRUST:** Describe the unique influences that you have coming out of Indiana.

**STEVEN:** Well, we have influences from everything coast oriented because that's what we hear on the radio. But, I'd say our perspective as our own direction and our own attitude, we didn't get influenced by all the jaded music that you see on the

coasts.

We take what we're doing seriously but we don't take ourselves too serious.

I think that shows because we're from the midwest. We have a sense of humor about things. In the midwest, if you don't have a sense of humor, you just don't get it.

**THRUST:** How did the band come to the attention of MCA Records?

**STEVEN:** We went out to LA because Vicky Hamilton from Geffen was interested in the band. While we were there, our manager let everyone in town know we were showcasing. We ended up doing six showcases in five days. We met Brett Hartman (MCA/A&R) who was knocked out by the band's live energy. He mentioned that he felt the band was very genuine which is our claim to fame. Everything we do comes naturally.

**THRUST:** Did Brett have a great interest in the band?

**STEVEN:** He signed us, didn't he? His tastes are usually more glam but he saw something, either dollar signs or the honesty of what we're doing.

**THRUST:** Let's talk about your debut album on MCA Records which should be released in April or May. The project was produced by Howard Benson (Bang Tango, PBF, TSOL). Why was Howard chosen?

**STEVEN:** When we were doing our showcases in LA, Brett turned us on to the Bang Tango tape and we really liked it, especially the production. We then listened to the Pretty Boy Floyd tape. Those bands are complete opposites but their tapes both had great production. Finally, Brett turned me on to Howard's number, and about after twenty minutes, I was sold on the idea of letting him produce the tape. Howard had a lot of good ideas about things the band had already discussed.

**THRUST:** So you're happy with the production job?

**STEVEN:** Definitely. Howard brought out our midwestern feel but still got the live, hard-edge sound that we were after.

**THRUST:** *Stick To Your Guns* has been chosen as the title for the release. Tell us about it.







# SWEET FA

**STEVEN:** It's a balladish type thing. The song is autobiographical. It refers to a relationship that I had with my dad. Even if you get your ass knocked down, you have to get up and do it. Nobody is going to pick you back up. Nobody is going to help you unless you help yourself. It's a self-worth thing. You've got to work for it and strive for it. That's how we've gotten where we're at. Everybody has worked their asses off to get here and we're not slowing down. In fact, we're picking up the pace and running with it.

**THRUST:** What other hot songs should Thrusters be listening for?

**STEVEN:** "Prince For The City" is a cool one. "Whisky River" is our runaway train song with a fast snare. I wrote the song about the life of being in a cover band in the bars. A woman will bring you a shot and that's the start. Then you're headed down the Whisky River and it's gonna kill you dead. I was a heavy drinker when I was playing in the bars. It's a story of barroom relationships. "Do A Little Drivin" is a song we wrote up in Canada. It's about a lady who's bored with her marriage and is looking for some fun. It's a story about trouble.

**THRUST:** What's going to be the first single released?

**STEVEN:** We really don't know yet. When it gets locked down, you'll be the first to know.

**THRUST:** You've said that Playboy has been a major influence in your vocal tracks. What did you mean by that?

**STEVEN:** When we were in Atlanta, I had five or six of the newer issues of Playboy. I've got a prescription to Playboy. Most people have a subscription. I have a prescription. I just kept them on my stand. You can go crazy singing in a room for twelve hours, but if you turn around and see a pretty girl, it takes the edge off your fatigue. I was looking at this one girl Tetra and I swear she was breathing.

**THRUST:** Are you sure you haven't been smoking corn stalks?

**STEVEN:** Not before lunch.

**THRUST:** What's this about the Guernsey sacrifice?

**STEVEN:** Trick, our drummer, was going home to Kansas and hit a cow at

one o' clock in the morning driving through some fog. It about killed him and his girlfriend. Luckily, he survived.

**THRUST:** Is the band's name taken from the classic Sweet song?

**STEVEN:** Actually it's not. It was more of a slang thing. Everybody's looking for some Sweet FA.

**THRUST:** Is the band influenced by Sweet?

**STEVEN:** I like some of their tunes but I'm not a devout follower. We were influenced more by Van Halen, Aerosmith, AC/DC with a little touch of Blackfoot or some Skynyrd. There's a little southern fry to it. It sizzles when you throw it on the grill.

**THRUST:** How do you feel about entering the national rock arena and toughing it out with the big boys?

**STEVEN:** I think things are gonna go over very well. I'm optimistic and not just cautious. I know what the band is capable of. I see the things that we are doing right. We have one advantage. We see what other bands a step or two ahead of us are doing and we try to learn from their

mistakes. We're going to do everything it takes to sell over 100,000 copies of this album. At that point, it becomes more difficult for a label to ignore you.

**THRUST:** What is Sweet FA's niche in the music world?

**STEVEN:** We have a real strong live performance energy. We're a fireball when you see us live. We go out, have a good time, and get people involved. It works. In the quest for the all-important attitude, some bands have passed the fact that kicking ass and having fun can still work. We found that out a long time ago. That's what's going to carry us through.

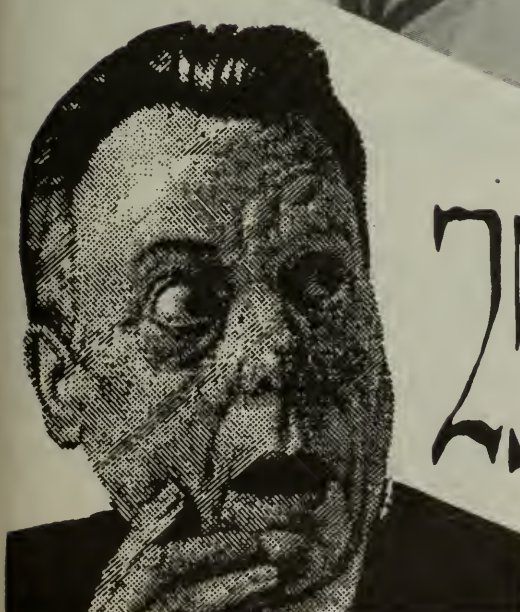
**THRUST:** Does Florida have a lot to look forward to when the band is in town?

**STEVEN:** Hell yes. It'll be a good show and a hot time in the ol' town tonight. Drink your beer or whatever you have in your hand. You can howl at the moon when we play. It's a roller coaster ride. We'll take you up and down and turn you over and do it again.



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# BARONS

# as

# LOVE

## by Stiff

The Barons of Love have been knocking around the Bay area, playing their sleazy, no-frills brand of R-N-R for the last decade. The Barons are Huey on drums, Eric on guitar and Metz on the bass. They all share vocal chores.

On the eve of their release on the Love label, the band takes a look at the decline and fall of the Tampa Empire.

The following interview took place in the Suburban Living Room From Hell, where the Great American and Wonderful Human Being, Stiff and The Barons of Love consumed large quantities of Anheuser Busch products.

**STIFF:** How long have The Barons of Love been together?

**ERIC:** It's my sixth year in the band. Before that, I was in the Burning Dogs and we had a career of opening for the Voodoo Idols.

**METZ:** It will be ten years on Valentine's Day.

**STIFF:** You changed your name from the Voodoo Idols. What was the reason behind that?

**HUEY:** We couldn't get gigs anymore, so we changed our name to get shows.

**STIFF:** Was it that much of a problem getting shows?

**HUEY:** It was for us. We didn't have problems getting the first gig. But, we had lots of problems getting the second!

**METZ:** The bar owners thought we were sexist and racist.

**STIFF:** The band is obviously influenced by Lou Reed. What are some of your other influences?

**BOL:** Cramps, The Stooges, Gun Club—anything that's like ten years old.

**STIFF:** What's your relationship with the creative Charlie Pickett?

**HUEY:** We heard the *Live at the Button* record and somebody said he was going to play down at the old Roadhouse. We called

up this guy who booked the bands there named Cheryl. *(laughter)*

We really wanted to play with Charlie Pickett and he said OK but we had to open for Roach Motel the night before.

**STIFF:** How did that go?

**HUEY:** It was weird, pretty weird. We had played at a Slamfest in Gainesville and they had us in this little fanzine. They gave us a shitty review which the bass player wrote. Eric had this huge friend who came down to the show in 38° weather wearing only a vest. He stood in front of Roach Motel all the time they were on, pounding his chest yelling, "Rusty, Rusty, I came for you." *(more laughter)* Back to Charlie. The first night we just hung out with him. Then every time he came to town we played with him.

**STIFF:** You also open for the Psycho Daisies a lot.

**HUEY:** Yeah, they used to crash with us when they didn't stay with you! *(laughter)*

**STIFF:** You can't prove that! What do you think of hardcore?

**ERIC:** We used to listen to it when it first came out. All the violence really turned me off.

**STIFF:** Do you guys have new material coming out?

**ERIC:** We have ten songs ready and might

go back in the studio to do five more.

**STIFF:** What label is it going to be on?

**ERIC:** It will probably be on our own Lone Records. We sent out tapes but we've had no response yet.

**STIFF:** What companies received tapes?

**BOL:** Midnite, Renaissance. Mostly European labels.

**STIFF:** So, it's easier getting European labels interested than American ones.

**ERIC:** There are hardly any American independents left anyway. At least for the music we play. They put out a lot of sleazy rock and roll in Europe.

**STIFF:** Nothing the matter with that. The world needs that stuff. You've opened for many bands. Who were the coolest and the easiest to get along with?

**METZ:** The Psycho Daisies. We learned how to act like a band from those guys and how to deal with the jerks that run the clubs. *(There's some animosity in the band right now for not getting paid at last night's gig.)*

**ERIC:** We never call and ask a place for a gig. They always call us and they still give us a hard time. Psycho Daisies and Charlie Pickett are probably the only cool bands we ever opened for. We played with Black Flag and UK Subs.

**HUEY:** Black Flag stayed at Eric's because there were 25 people sleeping in the living room. They trashed the place where Henry slept in the trailer. So in the morning when he came in he started yelling "Clean this place up right now!" which they did. It was cool.

**STIFF:** Henry made them clean it up? I always heard that he had a really big ego and was on a rock star trip.

**ERIC:** No. He was really down to earth but maybe he's changed.

**METZ:** It was pretty funny. He and the drummer were meditating to "The Birthday Party" before the show. *(everybody starts laughing)*

**STIFF:** Do you guys have full-time jobs?

**METZ:** I do.

**HUEY:** I don't and I'm damn proud of it! I handle all the band's business.

**STIFF:** So, you're the manager?

**HUEY:** Yeah, manager and enforcer. Besides, somebody's got to stay by the phone.

**METZ:** Yeah, and keeping us informed about what's happening on Green Acres.

**STIFF:** What happened to your previous singer?

**ERIC:** We just weren't compatible anymore. We wanted to play and he never wanted to sing. We threw him out!

**HUEY:** We played at the Moonlite Lounge one time and the manager came up and asked us to do instrumentals because he hated John's singing so much.

**STIFF:** Has the band ever done a tour?

**METZ:** In Jackson, Mississippi we played this place called W.C. Dons. It was out in the middle of nowhere. Panther Burns had played there before which is our all-time favorite band. We also played New Orleans the night before the Superbowl.

**STIFF:** That must have been a madhouse.

**METZ:** Panther Burns opened for us and Alex Chilton was supposed to jam with us

but he had car problems and couldn't make it. The guitar player from Panther Burns offered us about every drug available but we just said no, maybe later.

**STIFF:** What habits do you boys have?

**ERIC:** Anheiser-Busch products.

**METZ:** Whatever's free

**HUEY:** Be like me. Be drug free.

**STIFF:** Take some no-talent bands that are getting signed to major labels. Do you ever feel like you're beating your head against a wall? You've been at it for ten years.

**HUEY:** It really doesn't bother us. That's what they're going for. We're just doing this for ourselves.

**ERIC:** It would be alright to sell ten million records but like Hugh says, we play for ourselves and maybe one or two of our fans.

**STIFF:** So, you have no aspirations to be the next Bon Jovi?

**METZ:** No, but we'd like to be the next Gun Club.

**STIFF:** That means something.

**HUEY:** Somebody has to be.

**ERIC:** We have no interest in moving to Athens or Atlanta. Sweden or Amsterdam would be OK, though.

**STIFF:** Do you really love sleazy rock and roll?

**HUEY:** We don't sound like that by accident. We really try to sound like that.

**METZ:** If it's out of tune, it's supposed to be out of tune.

**ERIC:** There's not a song we do that has a smooth ending.

**STIFF:** How much vinyl do you have out?

**BOL:** Two 7 inches, an album and an EP. We had a song on *Tampa Smokes* and we have a song coming out on a Termite compilation.

**STIFF:** What do you think about music censorship?

**HUEY:** Nothing we listen to is censored! Everybody should be against censorship. It's just crap the government makes people think about while they're pulling their real dirty tricks. If the government censored our music, we'd probably sell more.

**STIFF:** With all the bands that come and go, how would you describe your longevity?

**HUEY:** It goes back to the fact that we play for ourselves. We don't care what people think.

**METZ:** There are some bands that think like we do—like the Forgotten Apostles. They're real trashy and the Grassy Gnoll Gunmen. I saw them a Cessars and Robert Wagman was sitting there with his fingers in his ears acting like it was killing him to listen.

**STIFF:** One last question, How did you come up with the name, Barons of Love?

**HUEY:** We got the name from an Alex Chilton Bootleg song about Elvis. Shooting up drugs and dying in the bathroom. The words go like, "Oh, the Baron went into the bathroom. Oh, he never should have locked that door." It just talks about him flopping around on the floor all drugged out. It's really a cool song.





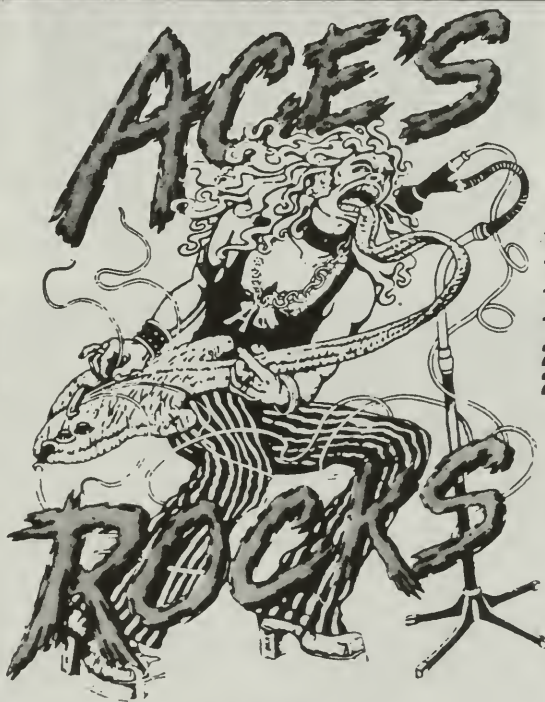
The Barons of Love or as their alter-egos are known: Huey, Eric and Metz

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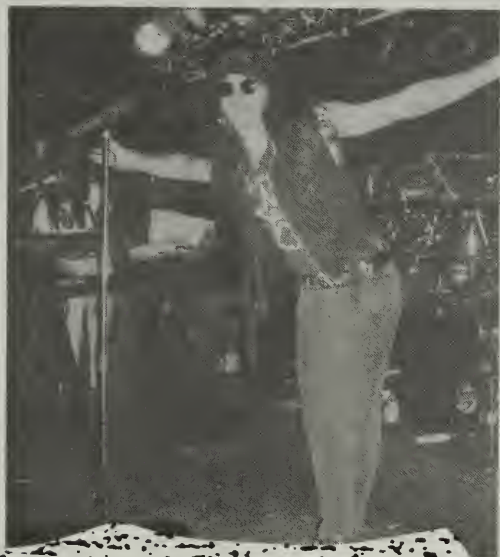
# ROCK-IT DOME SKID ROW



Tampa, You're a Great Crowd...



...but, why are you wearing hockey masks!



Autodrive sneakin' in the layout!



Patrick XYZ Checking His Eyes for Cracks



Mr. XYZ



XYZ Drummer



The Rectangle Man and His Dog, Coma Sneak In



How about an Autodrive autograph?



# ROCK-IT DOME XYZ



Hey, Pat What Do You Think  
of This Tampa Crowd?



Well, they're more  
civilized than Ocala.



I Said Read It, Not Eat It



Thank You Driver For Getting Us Here



Lookin For A Kltty?



Doesn't Look Like New  
Kids On The Block To Me



Deloris Telescope lost  
in this layout!



Attack of the XYZ's



The Sneeze Beez Making The Switch



# HERICANE

## Calm Before The Storm ————— by DJ Justice

A decent gig is hard to come by these days. And at the bulging venues in L.A., it's nearly impossible. The thing is, once you get your shot, there's the club-owner from hell wanting his piece of the action...and up-front. But wait...let's cut these poor dudes a break! They *do* have to make a living. And if they let every Joe Rocker in the valley climb up on their stage, they'd be skid rowing it in no time. Get the picture?

O.K., so where's the happy medium? How about a band that could draw a sell-out crowd at the drop of a guitar pick? A band that could play seven shows in L.A. and get the big guns checking 'em out? A band that could basically kick some major derriere? Too good to be true? HERICANE ALICE thinks not!

Fresh on the scene and in yo' face, vocalizer Bruce Nauman and company are here to please. After guitarist Danny Gill and bassman Ian Mayo "stole" their customized frontman from a Minnesota band (of the same moniker), the boys rounded the foursome out with skins-man Jackie Ramos. And Hurricane Alice was born.

Wait a sec...you thought I said "Hericané"? I did...really! (In a monotone commercial voice) *In Los Angeles, a band decides to call themselves Hurricane Alice. Later, in the same area, the same group of individuals suddenly appear as Hericane Alice. Fact or fiction?? You decide.* (Back to the regular voice) Better yet, why not let Danny and Ian fill you in?

# ALICE

**THRUST:** I guess a good place to start is at the beginning.

**IAN:** Oh no! Not the dreaded beginning question!

**DANNY:** I bet you're going to ask us how we got started. (To Ian) Let's just tell him we don't want to talk about it.

**THRUST:** O.K. then... Where were you born? No seriously...

**IAN:** Danny and I hooked up through another drummer. We ended up having Bruce, our singer, come out to L.A. for a demo we were doing. At the time, he was in a band that was doing well in Minnesota, but he liked us and said if anything came from the demo he would back us up. Anyway, about a week after we did the demo, we set some showcases up and started getting exposure.

**DANNY:** Ian and I had played together in a warehouse in Long Beach and we would live wherever we practiced. No shower, the whole bit for a year before we found Bruce to sing on our tape.

**THRUST:** No shower for a year? You're lucky he would even talk to you guys! (*mutual hysterics*) So you were doing the showcases...

**IAN:** Yeah, we had been doing showcases from the start. Really, we only played six or seven shows in L.A. Bruce's band in Minnesota was called Hurricane Alice and we just took the name and put it to our music. Between playing here we would jet up to Minnesota and play for a couple of weeks and then come back. Atlantic was interested but they wanted to see us play in front of a big crowd. So they flew to Minnesota to see us. I guess they liked what they saw cuz they signed us.

**THRUST:** Your album on Atlantic just hit the streets, right?

**DANNY:** Yeah, like two weeks ago.

**THRUST:** Any premature reactions?

**DANNY:** Yeah. We shipped 14,000 copies and there's already been re-orders. So, we've sold about 20,000 copies in two weeks. For an unknown band, that's really good. The label's really pleased.

**IAN:** We lucked out because we got a lot of press before the album came out. People knew of us but they didn't know what we sounded like. Our video's out for "Wild, Young and Crazy" and I think that's really going to get things rolling. It's a great video.

**THRUST:** Yeah, big time exposure.

*Note: At this point, the alert Thrust editor suggests a question for the Hericane boys.*

**EDITOR:** Ask them about the lawsuit with the band Hurricane.

**DANNY:** Aaagghhh... O.K. but make it brief.

**IAN:** Yeah, we really don't want to make a big deal out of this. They wanted us to change the name and we basically didn't want the hassle. We had a good chance of winning if it went to court because there's so many similarities between a lot of bands names. We didn't want to take a chance on it delaying the album. So we compromised and changed a couple of letters.

**DANNY:** What do you think about it?

**THRUST:** Aahh... Big deal, you know?

**DANNY:** Yeah, right.

**THRUST:** It was kind of interesting at first because of the controversy, but once you get past that...

**DANNY:** I didn't like the change that much at first. Now I think it looks better with the name being a little shorter.

**IAN:** I think it'll work to our advantage.

**DANNY:** We could rag on those guys for doing it but we don't want to promote it.

**THRUST:** O.K. We'll just say "Hurricane who?"

**DANNY:** There you go!

**THRUST:** You recently shot your first video for the album.

**IAN:** Yeah, December 18th.

**THRUST:** I'm sure a lot of people are probably curious about what was involved in doing it.

**IAN:** Basically, they have a storyline of how things are going to go. We run through the song and they set up different cameras. It was funny because the stage was three levels high and we're totally busting ass up and down this thing. Most of the shots were the first level anyway.

**DANNY:** It was mostly a "live-concert, huge stage, and lights" video. We also had a garage scene at the beginning. There were some close-ups and some shots of a girl.

**THRUST:** The scantily clad girl shots?

**DANNY AND IAN:** Oh yeah!

**THRUST:** Are you guys comfortable with the emphasis that's placed on the videos? I mean, is this video a decent representation of the band?

**DANNY:** Yeah because we're a totally high-energy, visual band and it's hard to get that across, even on the record. A video does us good because people can see what we're about. As long as MTV doesn't get too down on metal, we'll be all right.

**THRUST:** Who knows.

**IAN:** Yeah, they've been cutting back on metal since the first of the year which is a real bummer. On "Wild, Young and Crazy," one of the first lines is *...bet your ass I'd be free*. We had to change that to *...bet your life I'd be free*, because of the MTV censors.

**DANNY:** Motley Crue had "ass" on their "Kickstart My Heart" video, but I guess we're not big enough yet. It's still a killer video.

**THRUST:** Is the live show where it's at for Hericane Alice?

**IAN:** The live show is definitely where it's at for us. We've been touring for a couple of years now, way before we got signed. We go nuts when we're not playing out. That's what's happening to us now. (*Danny cheering in the background*) GET US OUT!! GET US OUT!!

**THRUST:** Was the studio frustrating for the band?

**DANNY:** It was strange because we had done demos before. This was *our* album though. We were concerned about how it was going to come out. It was cool, though because our producer didn't try to change us at all. We just cleaned up a few things and worked with what we had. It came out great.

**THRUST:** Are you going to let the album hang for a few before you hit the road?

**IAN:** We're going to try to head out as soon as possible. If we have to do it on a smaller level, just to go, we'll do it. We gotta get out there.

**DANNY:** Yeah, L.A. gets on your nerves if you're sitting around doing nothing.

**THRUST:** I've heard that Hericane Alice is the ultimate party band. What's the deal?

**IAN:** Our singer's a nut! The band never knows what this guy is going to do next. Our shows are like Big Time Wrestling.

**THRUST:** Do you have any cage matches scheduled? Possibly some spaghetti wrestling?

**DANNY:** We're going to get into trouble for telling "Bruce" stories again.





**IAN:** We had to calm things down a little bit. You know, lawsuits from angry parents and all.

**THRUST:** Let's talk about a couple of cuts. How about the first single "Wild, Young and Crazy?"

**IAN:** A lot of people had different ideas about what the first single should be. We went with that because it really captured the image of the band. That's where our hearts lie.

**DANNY:** "Dream Girl" is one that the label really liked. We didn't want to release that one first because it's more of a ballad. I think that will probably be the

next one though.

**THRUST:** I get the impression this is a hard working band.

**IAN:** Yeah, we just go nuts whenever we don't play. There's bands that are total party bands and you see them on the strip all the time. Those are pretty much the bands that have been here for years. You get out of it what you put into it.

**DANNY:** It's weird. Among the local fanzines there's almost a resentment because we didn't pay a million dollars to advertise the band. We got signed right away. We just did our demos and went to the labels instead of paying to play in the

clubs.

**THRUST:** Speaking of "pay to play," what do you think of that part of the scene in L.A.?

**DANNY:** We got lucky and skipped by it. We did pay a couple of times. I can see it from the point of a club owner. There's so many shitty bands out here and the owners gotta protect themselves. I think it's ridiculous how much they charge. I mean, they want you to buy \$800 worth of tickets in advance.

**IAN:** I see it both ways too because it's dog-eat-dog and the strong will survive. If you can survive here, you can make it

anywhere.

**DANNY:** I thought that was New York. N.Y. has a cooler scene than here. They pay in N.Y. There's just so many bands here. This is where everybody ends up.

**THRUST:** O.K. guys. For those people out there going, "Hmmm, Hericane Alice. I wonder what these guys are about." What would you say?

**IAN:** We would have to say that the music speaks for itself. This band is entertaining. We try to put on a show for our crowds. People should expect the unexpected.

**DANNY:** Because anything can happen!



# The Title

by  
Michael Barnett

My name is Marcus Brunhardt. I follow an echo—the echo of my dead wife; she leaves a path, a scent. I’ve seen her twice since she died, but she doesn’t look my way.

I followed it to an office where they make up titles for writers who can’t think up their own. Masquerading as a short story writer I gained entry. My credentials unchecked, I was told to bring the story I wanted a title for. I wrote one. It’s about a man and his bird.

The next morning I went back. A sign on the door said: Mr. Brunhardt. Please deposit your story in the slot and return on Monday morning.

The rest of the weekend I drank in the pubs trying to soften my pain. On Monday I returned to the office.

“And what can I do for you today?” he asked. “It’s Monday.”

“I know it’s Monday. I was here Friday.”

“Well? What can I do for you?”

“Are you the one I’m supposed to see?”

“It depends...on what you want to see me about.” He didn’t look up from his desk, shuffled papers, took a pencil from behind his ear. “Speak up. I haven’t got all day.”

“I’m here for a title.”

“Of course you are. What’s it to be?” he asked.

“I thought...”

“We do the thinking here. What’s it to be?”

“How about *The Man Who Loved Birds*?”

“That’s silly,” he snorted. “Who would want such a title? Leave it to us. We’ll come up with one.” He shuffled his papers. “What’s it to be?”

“It’s a story about a man and his bird.”

“I know what it’s about. What’s it to be?”

“Excuse me,” I said. “I thought you thought up titles. I thought you would come up with one.”

“Leave it in our hands.”

I looked around the office. We were alone. Just the man I was talking to with his sparse white sticky hair. He was fat and greasy. He made me feel uneasy.

“What am I supposed to do?” I asked.

“What would you like to do?”

“I’d like to get on with it.”

“What did you have in mind?”

“A title!”

“Well of course you do,” he said.

“Leave it to us.” Shuffling his papers, “Excuse me a moment. I’ll be right back,” he got up and left the room, slamming the door behind him.

I wondered where that door led. I looked at my watch. I would time him.

One minute passed. Then another. I heard machine noise, but I couldn’t determine what type. I shuffled my feet on the carpet, glancing at the papers on his desk.

One caught my eye, only half the title visible. It read: *The Man Who...*

The door opened. He brushed passed me to his chair. His pencil was gone. “Can I help you?”

“Yes,” I said. “I’m here for a title.”

“You’re in the right place. Now what will it be?”

“It’s a story about a man and his bird.”

“Hmm. Just a moment. I think I’ve got it. Yes. I’ve got it.”

“Finally,” I thought. “What do you think?”

“Excuse me?”

“I said: ‘What do you think?’”

He examined his fingernails. “Have to clean them once a day. They get godawful dirty in here. Where were we?”

“My title.”

“Yes, your title. Let me see.” He moved a stack of papers to one side. “Here it is. I’ve been looking for this for a month. Fred will be pleased.”

“What is it?”

He stared vacantly at the rug.

“Nothing,” I muttered.

“Well, if you have no further questions, I bid you good day.”

“What about my title?”

He opened a drawer, removed a pencil and pointed it at me. “You want a title? So that’s why you’re here.”

What could I do but sigh?

“Titles are a very tricky matter, but you’ve come to the right place.” He shuffled his papers. “How about *The Conestoga Wagon Theory*? That’s a dandy. Yes. I’m certain that would be perfect. Do you agree?” twirling his pencil and staring at me.

“Absolutely not.”

“Then it’s settled.” He held out his hand. “Good day, sir. Pay the cashier.” Hand extended, yelling “Fred! I found it,” he sat in his chair and rocked.

Glancing at his watch “Lunchtime,” he opened his desk drawer and produced a green banana.



“Give me the rabbit.”

“Rabbit? What rabbit?”

Peeling it, he tossed the fruit behind him and salted the peel.

“Fred!”

The door opened. An old woman stuck her head in: “Fred’s dead.”

“Of course...!” sticking his finger straight up, banana peel flying across the room, smacking against the wall and sliding to the wooden floor.

She shook her head and shut the door. The machines grew louder. It sounded like cats. I know what they sound like; I’ve heard them at night.

“That imbecile. How could he do this to me? What am I going to do? Answer me.”

He leaned forward, examining me, eyes teary, rose red. They reminded me of the satin sheets my wife bought before she died. I miss her. Especially when I can’t remember her face.

“Are you still here? Can’t you see I’m busy? Get out!”

I wasn’t going to. I hadn’t got what I’d come here for. I stared my best stare. My wife could really stare. “Do you know who you’re speaking to?”

“Don’t be coy with me,” he said.

“Not in my office...or any office.”

“It’s people like you....” I pointed.

He grabbed my finger and bit it.

I forgot to scream.

He was chewing my hand. I tried to get loose, but his grip was too strong.

The door opened. He turned, hand in mouth, and mumbled.

The old woman—I remembered her from the street, “She sleeps in a box, I think,” stood shaking her head. “Remember what happened last time. Naughty, naughty.”

Shaking her finger, she left.

He snarled and let go.

I surveyed the damage, keeping a watchful eye. He hadn’t done much. I slammed my fist on his desk. “I’ve a right to be upset!”

“What have we here?” he said, picking up a paper and holding it to the light. “I’ve been looking for this for a month. Fred will be pleased.”

He pushed a button on his intercom. “Send in Fred.”

I wiped the slobber off my hand.



"Those bastards in Iran." He looked at me. "It's people like you who want me to conform to your ways. 'I can't do it right,' you say unless I obey your ideas and rules—your trials and *Him* make me sick. I have other lives."

If only my wife could have met him, she'd have known what he meant. I was thinking about those bastards in Iran when the phone rang. He didn't answer it.

"Aren't you going to pick it up?" In his chair he swiveled in circles. Mine didn't swivel.

He began singing. His voice was sweet, low, deep, resonating through the room. I think it was German. I couldn't be sure. I'd heard very little German before. I'm from Illinois. When you're from Illinois you know how to get what you want...and to be patient. I sat and waited and listened, wishing for a tape deck. His voice.... I'd never heard anything so beautiful. Such range, clarity. He was a musical genius.

"You're a musical genius," I said. Strings, oboes, flutes, harps, an orchestra filled the room, so real that I looked around for the musicians. From his throat did these notes float? "It must be a hidden stereo." I walked around the room pretending to examine my shoelaces as I looked in his bureau. The notes pulsed through me and I grew dizzy, much like when I used to ride roller coasters. My wife loved them. She was patient, but she wasn't from Illinois. Into his credenza, that's the next place I looked. I looked at his rug, red and black weave, worn, but clean. I was scared to look under it. I didn't remember a phobia of looking under rugs.

"Look under it," he sang. I had searched the whole room. It was the only place left. Except his throat.

I went for the rug. "Don't touch it!" Her voice filled me with emotion I can't describe. It's the way you feel when love dies or you lose your soul.

She stood before him, golden hair flowing lightly, more beautiful than I remembered. She shook her head and forbade him harm me. As she turned toward me, I froze.

I woke on the rug, head pillowed, comforter over me, bottle of champagne, couple of crystal glasses. And I hadn't woken with a start.

Candlelit the room, I had a glass. Then another. "That's better."

This was the third time. Why wouldn't she let me die? Would I be with her then? "Show me the way." And I looked to the door. "That's the way," as I walked to it. But it wouldn't open. I wouldn't pound. I was determined to hold her echo. Noise would only weaken it.

"Maybe this time." She wasn't fading as quickly as usual. I tried to sense her direction, never so strong before; perhaps she was behind the door.

"I must remain quiet, concentrate, relax, follow her for she is near and when I find her I'll kiss her and we'll

fall to the ground laughing..."

The door opened. "You're looking much better, Mr. Jones," he said.

Finger to lips I tried to silence him. "You'll have to leave now."

"Shh."

"What?" real loud, "You're mumbling."

He sat in his chair and swiveled. He was going to sing again. I had no choice.

There is silence in death. And the whole time I was doing it, one thought ran through my mind: "I don't want to go to jail."

To the door. I will go through. I will find her—to be rejoined. I turn the handle but it doesn't budge. I turn some more. There's a key I decide. To his slumped frame I tip toe. I find it in his pocket and all I can think: "Why the rabbit?"

I wasn't surprised to find him. And I liked him immediately, named him Dean. Put him in my top pocket where he could see. "Are you ready, Dean?" I whispered. He flapped his ears and we went through.

On the other side of the door there was sky above the alley. She wasn't there. I walked back inside. Her echo hadn't been strong outside, but in the room I could feel her. I sat down and petted Dean.

He sat up in his chair. "An immortal of some sort," I reasoned. "That's why he can sing like that."

"You have my bunny." Dean twitched. I'd have to kill him again if he didn't shut up.

"She's not going anywhere. And neither are you if you don't give me my bunny."

In my eyes was a dare an immortal would fear. He shut up. I pointed to the door.

He shrugged and, looking at Dean, sang of flowers and butterflies and trees and forests and streams and Dean hopped to him and I was entranced, but not completely. He was strong; I'm from Illinois.

"Time passes slowly, time passes swift, time doesn't pass in here," from his lips. Nazis in a saloon where I once knew a girl from Cologne. They tortured her in various ways for being involved with the French Underground. They would have killed her, but for me. I can't show you the way. You must find it yourself."

"I had a love like yours," I said. "I haven't slept since she left. Wherever I go I sing soft in the night; for I will find her."

"Would you like some coffee while you wait?"

"No thank you."

"I sat in a bar in Berlin smoking cigarettes, drinking whiskey, watching her, listening," he said. "Of course I loved her. Every man did. But when the night faded, we went to the hotel. That's where I did it. I had to—even though I loved her. It was her voice. I would never find another.... You understand."

I didn't answer. "It's people like you...." He shook

his head. "Those bastards in Iran. I've done all I can. Good day." He pointed to the door.

I wasn't going to leave. "Don't make me get rough. I can be dangerous," he said, rubbing his hands, licking his lips, waiting for me to make my move.

The strength of her echo was growing.

"So you don't like *The Conestoga Wagon Theory*?" he smiled. Hand on chin he said: "Tell you what I'll do. If you come back tomorrow, we'll come up with something different. Something you'll like. Our contract fulfilled." He sang a sonnet.

I assumed "Immortals" could be insane. Maybe if I ignored him, he would leave. Then I remembered. It was difficult to think when he was singing.

"Give me the rabbit."

"Rabbit? What rabbit?" I walked to the door and, turning my back to him, locked it. I could feel his eyes on me as I walked back and lay on the pillows. I poured a glass of champagne and searched for my cigarettes.

"Are you looking for these?" He held up my pack, grinning wildly. "How do you think I got them? Do you know?"

"You say you loved her." I avoided his grin. Then I looked at him. "Why'd you kill her."

His jaw dropped and I almost felt sorry for him, but since he was insane I knew he'd get over it.

He took one of my cigarettes and tossed it to me. I grabbed it lit in mid-air. I took a deep pull. "Thanks."

"She accepted with a grace you can't understand. It's cold, colder than you realize and when you feel it, you give up, for you know you'll never have warmth."

"Maybe you won't." He laughed slightly and shook his head. "You'll see. When it gets you, you'll have no more words. That's why I sing, Mr. Jones." He looked at me very business-like. "Tell me, Mr. Jones. What's your problem with *The Conestoga Wagon Theory*? We worked damned hard on it and I personally think it would do quite nicely. In fact it was you, Mr. Jones..."

"I'm not Jones."

He muttered curiously. "Who are you?"

I handed him my card. "Of course," he laughed. "You have a story about a man and his bird, don't you? We've done extensive research on your project. Excuse me a moment, I'll get your file."

He walked to the door, watching me from the corner of his eye, reached into his pocket, fumbled around for a while. "You have it, don't you?"

I nodded. He beat on the door. "Open up! Let me out!"

A voice from behind the door. The old woman. "What's the matter?"

"Open the door!"

"You've got the key."

"I don't have it," he cried, glancing at me.

"Who's got it?" He slumped to the floor, leaned against the door. "He does." "Ask him to give it to you." "He won't." "Kill him." "Can't." "Why?" "Dead wife." "The blonde?" "Yeah." "Oh."

"What can I do?" "I don't know. I'm not paid to make decisions. I'm going back to my office."

He looked at me. "How long are you planning on keeping me? I'm getting hungry."

"Why don't you go out the front door? The way I came in."

An hour passed without either of us moving. He looked at the floor and I vibrated in her echo. Another passed as dawn crept through the cracks around the rug shooting lightstrings through the darkness, for the candles had all burned out except for one he now held.

"Don't know about you, Mr. Jones, but I'm getting hungry. Awfully hungry. And I need a beer. What do you say we go across the alley and get a bite at the tavern. I know the owner."

I shook my head. "You're not being much of a sport." He pouted, looked around the room. "All I've got is salt. I'll starve."

"Listen," he said, crawling across the floor, "if you'll just let me run across the alley and get a sandwich, I promise I'll come back. Just a sandwich. Maybe some chips and a beer." He tilted his head in thought. "I'll bring you something." Reaching into his pocket he removed money and, counting it, looked at me. "My treat."

"Not until you bring her." "Look under the rug."

I shook with fear. "Are you scared, Mr. Jones? Scared of looking under a rug? And I have to starve to death for that? I'll be damned!"

He pulled Dean from his pocket and petting him, sadly bidding him farewell, popped him in his mouth.

After I killed him and got Dean out and dried him, bandaging and soothing and petting, I got hungry. How long could I remain?

As I lay on the pillows I sometimes wonder: Do we all have rugs we can't look under? Do we all have a room where an echo will stay that keeps us starving until we're away to a place where the pain isn't quite so intense? I'm waiting. Me and Dean. He sits in my pocket. We're getting lean.

I ate the banana long ago. It reminded me of the time I was in Illinois with my uncle at the State Fair. It was the first beer I ever tasted. I hated it. My mother told me beer was made of rats and garbage. Maybe she was right.

THE END





# The Black Cat



Welcome to a new hot issue of the local news you need to know!

Remember gang the cat tries to keep you *abreast* of the best happenings around. All tips, rumors and scandals are appreciated. Keep rock'n Kool Kittys!

## • TEXAS TREAT

For any of you felines who missed an opportunity to see Fave Texas Rockers **SHEER THREAT** during the Christmas season, catch 'em the 19th thru the 25th at the Rockit.

## • RUMOR HAS IT?

It could it be true? The cat caught hold of a piece of scandal that suggested that of Intice was once the bass player for Nasty Savage!! Please, let's put an end to this rumor right now!

## • BONHAM, CULTS AND ROCKITS

For all you cats who missed the **CULT** show, which by the way was impressive, even though it was rumored (and no the cat didn't start this one) that Ian was suffering from a blister in his throat, he still belted out his driven vocals supporting his fiercely determined comrades. After the show, the opening band, Bonham, piled into the Thrust Limosine, headed to the Rockit Club and treated the locals to an impromptu mini concert. What a bunch of guys to put on two shows in one night...

## • NEWS FLASH, UPDATE!!

The newly remodeled stage at the Volley Club was christened the 26th by the metal onslaught of Keith Kollins Krunch along with Silent Scream. If a stage can take a beating like that, it'll stand for awhile.

## • BACKSEAT DRIVER?

It was one those days following one of those nights. You know the kind of day I'm talking about! Well it seemed the guys in **Backseat Romance** were with me all the way. The night before Jeffrey's was sportin' some rowdy party people. Maybe it's the energy that the guys radiate. But Ron Travis (guitar) informed me that a good time was had by all. Along with support from Dez (guitar), Bobby Lane and skin man Nikki, **Backseat Romance** has been playing almost every venue in the Bay area and have gathered quite a flock of followers. Jeffrey's is a great place to check these guys out. It's not one of the larger clubs, but offers a lot in personality that people are drawn to as can be seen on any night, especially when the Romance

boys are on stage. So stop pussy footing around and put a little Backseat Romance in your life. More next month.

## • THE SEDUCTION PART I

Speaking of backseat romance, The Black Cat had a tentative appointment to keep with the boys from **Down n' Dirty** for an exclusive interview. But to my surprise this Cat was kidnapped from the safety of the Volley Club, and whisked into a slick black Cadillac. "And were are we going," this kitten purred. "For a short turn around the block... Heh Heh," leered two curly locked young gentlemen. This, I was informed by lead crooner **The Dude of Earl**, was the interview. How nice!! Served cocktails and hors d'vors by bass thumper **Mike Allenn**, we settled down for a chat. But who interviewed who isn't quite clear. Not along for the ride, but honorably mentioned, were **Christian Ripoll**, drums, and new untried talent on guitar. These Dirty boys were quick to point out that they are different from many Bay Area bands in that nothing that happens on stage is choreographed or contrived, and that as party bands go, they are the real thing. And after hearing an inebriated acoustic version of "Sneakin A Peck At Monique," my ears were peaked. "If you like that, you'll love us live!" they said. "We're wild!" they stated. "We're playing at the Volley Club, March 2nd and 3rd!" they advertised. "Be there!" they demanded. Well, if you put it that way. Tune in next month for Part II, See if **Down N' Dirty**'s talents are as large as their egos.

## • NAME YOUR POISON

**Hemlock-Websters** defines it as a poisonous weed. This cat recently had her first taste, and it wasn't fatal. The First Taste of **Hemlock**, the band, that is. A cumulative blend of "progressive hard edged rock", the 6 song demo was recorded at Florida Sound Studios with J.R. Sanson producing and Ken E. Brown assisting. The whole band contributed to the writing of such prime cuts as "Chamber Of Days," "Beware Of The Blizzard," and a classical intro called "The Vision." Though *The First Taste* is available for sale at local record stores, the band informed this kitty that the main intent is "not to make money" but to get their music out to the masses. **Hemlock**, featuring the talents of Glenn Barry, bass; Rich Micciche, vocals; Marcus Mal-

loy, guitar; **Mark Rinaldi**, guitar and a currently being auditioned drummer to replace **Armand K. Wilde** who left the band to pursue himself. The band has been rocking the Tampa Bay area for about two years and one thing is definite. These rock-cats know how to have a good time and by stirring up the crowds with party oriented rock, they encourage their fans to have a great time. This feline doesn't want to say that their fans are overly rambunctious or anything, but some sort of disarray always occurs. Sometimes, the partying during and between sets gets a little out of hand and even changes location such as to the ladies room at the Volley Club. Hey, why not?! After all, it is a big bathroom and the more the merrier. Then there's the hostage episode, again in the girls loo (a fetish or something, guys) when a member of the band was holding female patrons at water pistol point. One move, babe and the mascara's gonna run...

Dates have already been set for a tour of south and SW Florida and possibly north of the Mason-Dixon line. Then it's back to the studio to record a full-length album, slotted for a release in late summer,

for which writing has already begun. One of the new songs the boys are playing live, "Master of Disaster" is already a crowd favorite. A feature video is also in the making to be included in the new promo packs. In conclusion, **Mr. Marcus Malloy** told the Black Cat that he feels, "the current line-up makes for a solid base and the best is yet to come." No doubt.

## • OFF TO THE FOXES

You might have thought that it was a joke or that it wouldn't last but Tampa Bays only all-female rockers, **Foxxhead** are still fluffing their tails and are going strong. Playing everywhere from "A" circuit clubs to Uncle Ed's Hole In The Wall, The Foxes, (Tina Stinson, guitar; Stephani Sagan, vocals; Erica Rath, drums; and Kentucky, bass) have been hard at work. The girls had a rather tough beginning due to "mismanagement and the pressure to play out before we were realistically prepared for it." With a recent addition to the **Porthole Lounge's** six-week band rotation schedule, things should really start kickin' into high gear for the band. Well kits and kats, you'll either like **Foxxhead** or hate them, but you won't be able to ignore them.



**Hemlock**





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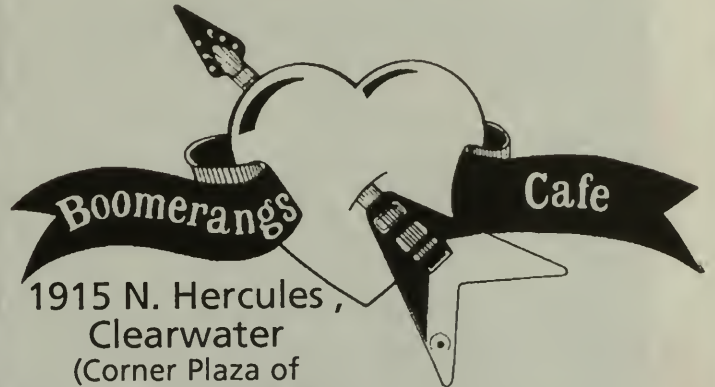
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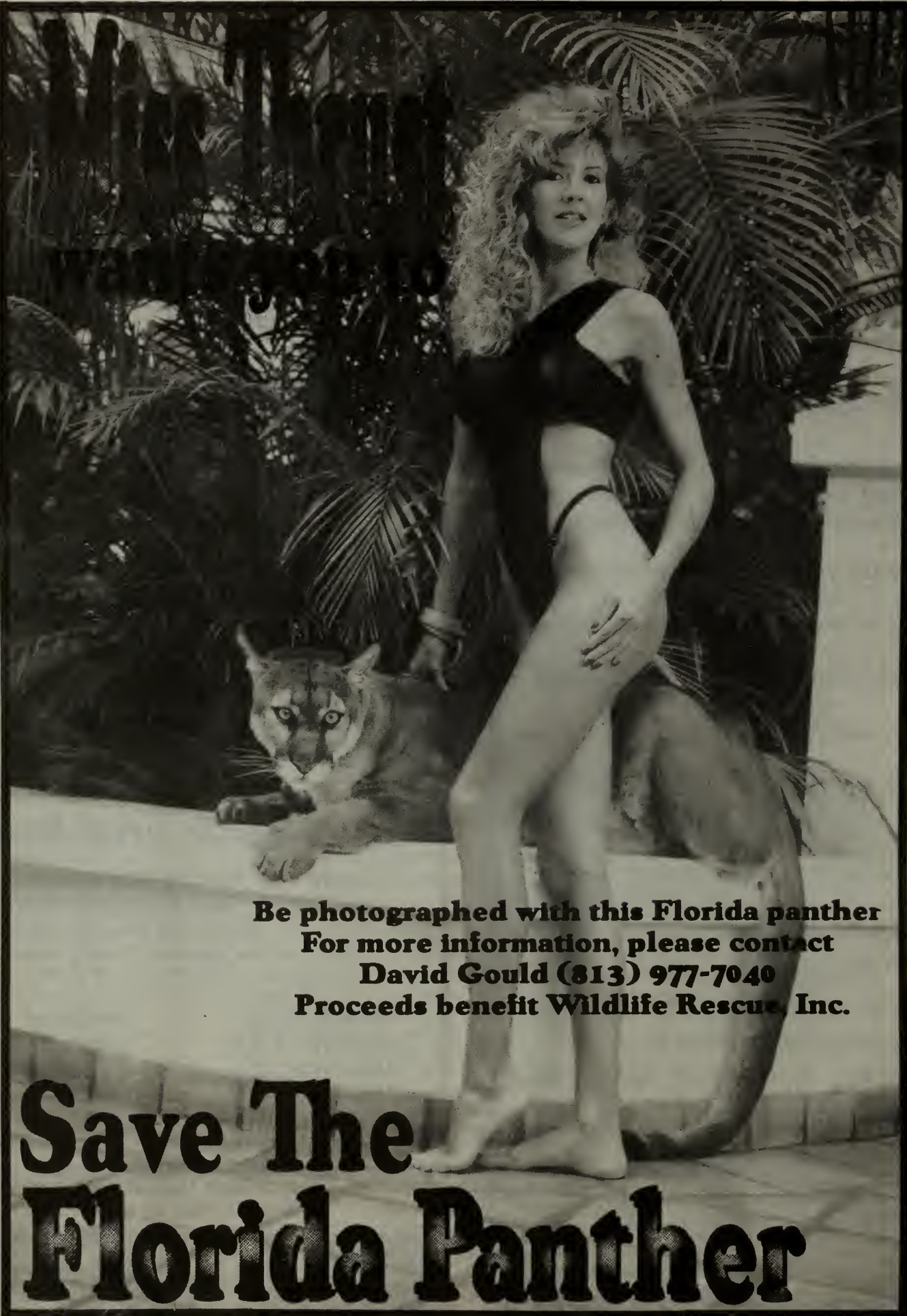
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